THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

EDINBURGH POLITICS: 1832-1852

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Preface

The Scottish Reform Act of 1832 and the Scottish Municipal Reform Act of 1833 destroyed the domination of the Tory party over Edinburgh politics. The champions of reform, the Edinburgh Whig lawyers, emerged as the triumphant new political leaders of the new, overwhelmingly liberal electorate. But by the late 1830s a large number of middle class electors had grown critical of the Whigs. Some radicals resented the domination of a legal clique over the constituency and attacked the Whig government for its slowness in dealing with outstanding grievances, such as the corn laws and the desire for further franchise reform. Another dissident group were the Dissenters who called for the abolition of the state church relationship and the annuity tax (the Edinburgh property tax maintaining the Established Church clergy). The Non-Intrusionist (later Free Church) movement was strong in Edinburgh and from 1840 onwards increasingly hostile to the Whigs. In 1847 an alliance fashioned out of these three disgruntled groups by the Dissenter leader, Duncan McLaren, achieved the humiliating defeat of the Whig candidate, T.B. Macaulay. The Liberal party that emerged out of this election was aiming at the complete overthrow of the Edinburgh Whigs, but due principally to the inability of the Dissenters and Free Churchmen to reconcile their ideological differences over voluntaryism and their jealous

rivalry for control of the Liberal party, the alliance collapsed in 1852. In the election of that year, Macaulay was triumphantly re-elected and McLaren was defeated. Although the latter's attempts to replace the Whig oligarchy with a broadly based Liberal party of alienated sectarians and middle class radicals failed in 1852, McLaren's efforts can be seen as one of the earliest and most significant attempts to create the basis of the Gladstonian Liberal party. This thesis describes in detail the local socio-economic, religious and political circumstances which crucially affected McLaren's activities, while trying to isolate those aspects of Edinburgh politics which reflect national political developments in early Victorian Britain.

I have used the terms Tory and Conservative interchangeably in this thesis since in newspapers, private letters and public speeches both terms were used interchangeably throughout the early Victorian period. The use of the term liberal in the 19th century was subject to much variation. Many Whigs styled themselves Liberals after 1832, but in Edinburgh at least, this change was never very popular and most journalists and letter writers continued to speak of the Whigs as Whigs, especially after McLaren's coalition of Dissenters and middle class radicals began to term themselves Liberals. Since this group did have a separate party structure and a self-conscious sense of independence from the Whig oligarchy, I have used the term Liberal for McLaren's

party and not for the Whig party. Confusion may be avoided by pointing out here that the Whig party structure was called the Liberal Aggregate Committee, but functioned very much for Whiggish purposes. When the terms liberal and conservative are used without capitalization, they are used in an ideological rather than party sense. This is particularly relevant when discussing the Whigs among whom were politicians with conservative and liberal attitudes towards further reform after 1832; these differences are dealt with in Chapter Two below.

For their help in supervising the research for this thesis, I am grateful to Dr. W. Ferguson and Dr. N. Phillipson of the University of Edinburgh. Professor G. Best has taken a very kind interest in my work and I am happy to thank him for that. I owe thanks as well to the staff of the Edinburgh Room of the Edinburgh Public Library, the National Library of Scotland and the Scottish Record Office for their assistance in introducing me to my sources. I am glad to be able to offer this thesis as partial acknowledgement of the generosity of the University of Edinburgh in providing me with a studentship for two years.

Abbreviations

DNB . . .	Dictionary of National Biography
EPL . . .	Edinburgh Public Library
NLS . . .	National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh)
PRO . . .	Public Record Office (London)
SRO . . .	Scottish Record Office (Edinburgh)
S. S. C. .	Society of Solicitors in the Supreme Courts
U. P. . .	United Presbyterian
W. S. . .	Writer to H.M. Signet

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CHAPTER ONE

Social and Religious Groups in Early Victorian Edinburgh

On the 19th and 20th of December 1832, several thousand citizens of Edinburgh went to polling places throughout the city to vote for two Parliamentary representatives. In the process, a new political age dawned in Edinburgh, whose political affairs had, until 1832, been dominated by the Tory influence of the Dundas family. The Town Council, a self-perpetuating oligarchy under the direct control of the Dundas interest, had elected Edinburgh's sole M.P. in previous times. The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832 transferred that power to the top seven per cent of Edinburgh's male citizenry; in 1833 the old Town Council was replaced by a new Council elected by a somewhat smaller electorate (based on the same new qualifications but limited to the central city area). The Dundas influence abruptly disappeared and political developments henceforth reflected the interests and ambitions of the new electorate. In this chapter, the most important social and religious interests and conflicts of the electorate will be discussed, and in the chapter that follows, the political groups and parties that took shape in the years after 1832 will be described.

With the new franchise limited to male occupiers and owners of buildings or lands of the yearly value of at least £10, only approximately 5,000 of Edinburgh's 137,000 citizens registered to form

the new electorate. The vast majority of the population continued to have no direct influence upon political decision-making in party councils or elections. Since this thesis is concerned with parties and elections, it necessarily concentrates upon the electorate and its particular desires and motivations. A study of the Edinburgh working class and its evanescent politically-oriented organizations in the early Victorian era would be valuable although difficult to construct, due to the shortage of promising research material (see bibliographical essay). In any case, this thesis, based largely upon middle class newspapers and correspondence, deals with the mainly middle-to-upper class electorate and the issues and conflicts which animated it -- specifically, the struggle for political supremacy between the Edinburgh lawyers and merchants and between the various denominational groups.

The Edinburgh of the 1830s continued to resemble the Edinburgh of the early 19th century in its prevailing social characteristics: the city's prominence was based on professional groups and functions rather than on industrial or commercial importance.[1] The city's law courts, university, churches and elegant residential districts continued to attract men of professional or social distinction who comprised a professional elite. This elite's needs were catered for by a large population of retailers and craftsmen, creating and selling high quality consumer goods which were served and maintained by a large servant population.

There was also another army of dependents on upper class patronage -- coachmen, washerwomen, milliners, gardeners, painters, upholsterers, messengers, porters, masons, etc. Casual labouring jobs on building sites and in warehouses and unskilled labour in the workshops of the craftsmen a nd manufacturers formed the major occupations of the rest of the working class. No large industrial enterprise, no particular product distinguished Edinburgh's economy. The major industries were printing and its allied trades, brewing, coachmaking, leather manufacture, jewellery and glassmaking. All of these were traditional industries organized on a small firm scale a nd none expanded dramatically in the mid-century period.[2] In fact, Edinburgh's economic and social structures changed scarcely at all during the early Victorian period. Nor did Edinburgh's population grow with anything like the phenomenal speed of such industrial centres as Glasgow.[3]

Although Edinburgh lacked a class of industrial enterpreneurs, the city had an abundance of retail merchants, skilled craftsmen and light manufacturers who gained gradually in economic importance throughout the period and came into a political position of considerable power in 1832.[4] Commenting on the condition of this diverse group as of 1800, the Whig advocate, Henry Cockburn, wrote:

there/...

> there was no class of the community so little thought of at this time as the mercantile. Their municipal councils, and chambers of commerce, and guilds, and all their public associations were recognized, because they had some power, however little. But individually, or merely as numbers of merchants, they were entirely disregarded. They had no direct political power; no votes; and were far too subservient to be feared . . . . our Scotch commerce was only dawning; and no merchants, great by the mere force of their wealth, had made either themselves or their calling formidable. [5]

After 1832, with the £10 franchise and a growing sense of their own importance, the merchants cast off this subservience and viewed with increasing hostility the continuing social and political dominance of the professional class in general and the Edinburgh lawyers in particular. Much of this thesis has to do with the conflict between the professional lawyers and the merchants and tradesmen, as it was expressed and felt in political terms and actions.[6]

Like many 'shopocracies' in Victorian cities, Edinburgh's middle class merchants tended towards radicalism and resented the Whig oligarchy which dominated the politics and society of the city. Not only in Edinburgh, but also in such cities as Birmingham, Leicester and Nottingham, the pro-Reform majority of the early 1830s tended by the 1840s to split into moderate Whigs of the upper middle class and more radical Liberals of a somewhat lower social background.[7] Social ambition stimulated, and was in turn stimulated by, radicalism. In Edinburgh it was this merchant group that was among the strongest supporters of the

Parliamentary reform movement of the 1820s and early 1830s, which had been spearheaded by the Whig lawyers.[8] Deriving confidence from their new political power after 1832, this group moved on to further triumphs in the reformed Town Council and became increasingly concerned with free trade.[9] The desire for further Parliamentary reform was another attitude that set this group off from the professional class who were not notably enthusiastic over the prospect of Corn Law abolition or further reform. The debate over further reform involved ideological beliefs, but also the very real awareness that an extended franchise would probably work against the continuing political power of the professional class.

Another typical aspect of this social and political conflict was the reluctance with which the middle class radicals joined forces, if at all, with working class radicals. As in other cities, in Edinburgh the Chartist movement was handled very cautiously by the middle class radicals who could countenance alliance only upon the grounds of moral force alone. They were not willing to elevate their rivalry with the professional group into class war, either by calling forth the working class in a general assault upon privilege or property, or by abandoning the established political structures. Their method was to work within the political framework, as constructed in 1832 and 1833, gradually moving towards a more challenging position from which an independent political movement -- the Edinburgh Liberal party --

was launched in the 1840s.

Although the professional or upper class of Edinburgh society included bankers, clergymen, gentlemen and ladies of quality, artists, teachers and many others, it was the legal profession that formed the core of this group a nd dominated its political affairs. As the seat of the highest court of law, the Court of Session, Edinburgh was the centre of Scottish legal activity. Dominating the courts were the judges of the Court of Session and the chief law officers -- the Lord Advocate supported by the Solicitor General, the advocate-deputes and sheriffs. The foremost legal society was the Faculty of Advocates whose Dean was regarded by most people, then and now, as the champion of the legal profession. There were two other legal societies, the Writers to H.M. Signet and the Solicitors in the Supreme Court, whose members were unable to plead in the courts like the advocates; there were also a number of independent solicitors unconnected with the S.S.C. The W.S. and solicitors handled all the aspects of legal casework except that of pleading in court and served as agents, commissioners, trustees, etc. for innumerable businesses, families, official bodies, and political parties. And finally, there was a host of men, calling themselves writers, clerks or secretaries, who staffed the offices of the lawyers.

The finest streets, squares and places in Edinburgh's New Town abounded with lawyers' residences. Successful lawyers could amass vast fortunes, a nd to become a judge (with a salary

of £3,000 p.a.) often involved such a reduction of income that advocates were frequently reluctant to accept the honour of a judgeship.[10] Legal practice might bring private wealth and almost always social prestige, and the social pre-eminence of the lawyers was not challenged as effectively as it might have been, had Edinburgh experienced the rise of an industrial economy and the consequent social re-arrangements which cities like Glasgow were undergoing. The cultural contribution of Edinburgh lawyers was as great as ever, especially as authors of books and articles, often published in Edinburgh's own famous periodicals.[11] Throughout the 19th century observers consistently attested to the social and cultural prestige of the Edinburgh bar. For instance, in 1819, J.G. Lockhart, in describing Edinburgh's 'great Jurisprudential aristocracy' insisted

> that the Bar is the great focus from which the rays of of interest and animation are diffused throughout the whole mass of society, in this northern capital. Compared with it, there is no object or congregation of objects which can be said to have any wide and commanding grasp of the general attention. 12

Likewise, at the other end of the 19th century, an advocate still summed up the Parliament House as

> the reflection of the political thought and aspiration of Scotland, and the centre of its mental activity in law, literature, and politics. It was the element in which Scotsmen of high ability breathed most freely. 13

Politically, the lawyers remained uniquely important due to the arrangement by which Scottish affairs were administered from

Westminster.[14] The Lord Advocate, a government appointee, was by definition an advocate, ensuring that the official whisper nearest the ear of any cabinet was bound to be a legal one. The communication of Scottish grievances and problems to Whitehall, the responsibility for devising and carrying Scottish legislation, much of the maintenance of the patronage of Scotland and other tasks fell upon the shoulders of the Lord Advocate, assisted by his junior, the Solicitor General of Scotland, and by the Scottish Lord of the Treasury. Traditionally the legal societies in Edinburgh had been consulted upon matters of national significance by Lord Advocates and were expected to represent the informed opinion of Scotland. The minutes of the legal societies after 1832 do not show a continuation of this broad function in the post-Reform years.[15] In any case, many lawyers maintained lively political interests, whether as political agents, M.P.s,[16] or applicants for the host of political legal appointments.

It is interesting to note that although the result of debates and proceedings recorded in the minutes of the legal societies indicate that a majority of the profession was Conservative, it is the Whigs who are most commonly associated with the Edinburgh lawyers. This was caused by the concentration of Scottish Whigs of great ability in the legal profession -- Whigs like Jeffrey, Cockburn, Murray, the Moncreiffs and Rutherfurd -- who especially after 1830 in the years of Whig government filled the legal and political offices open to advocates. The Conservative party was less dominated by the legal profession, although

of course the Conservative Lord Advocates, Solicitor Generals, etc. were all advocates. Great Conservative aristocrats, such as the Duke of Buccleuch, were effective counterpoises to the Conservative lawyers, especially since the latter were generally much less able than their Whig counterparts and also since what little support for Conservatism that there was in Scotland came from the counties where the Conservative landowners reigned supreme. Because the Whig party in Edinburgh, and to a large extent in Scotland, was dominated by the famous Edinburgh lawyers, the term Edinburgh Whig and lawyer became somewhat synonymous. Likewise, in this thesis, when the lawyers are mentioned in political terms the Whig lawyers are usually those in question.[17]

It was these Whig lawyers who were the leaders in the movement for Parliamentary and borough reform since the 1780s and who after 1832 took the leading political role in the overwhelmingly Whig constituency of Edinburgh. As suggested above, the policies of the Whigs concerning such issues as free trade and further Parliamentary reform became increasingly unsatisfactory to their merchant rivals; those policies and the principles and personalities of the Whig oligarchy that formed them will be described in Chapter Two. It is important to stress here how some of the activities and power of the Whigs were particularly crucial in creating and maintaining the social rivalry of the lawyers and the merchants.

A perennial cause as well as effect of this rivalry was the discontent created by the Whigs' use of the patronage system. The control of government patronage in Scotland lay with various government ministers in London, but the official channel was the Lord Advocate and Edinburgh Whigs seem to have been informally influential on the course of government patronage by advising friendly Whigs in London. Although much reduced from the excessive power of 18th century 'Scotch managers', the patronage power of the Whigs under a Whig government in London was considerable, ranging from legal appointments to all kinds of government posts and sinecures.[18] This concentration of patronage and influence upon the Edinburgh Whig lawyers and the dispensation of it upon the members of the Edinburgh legal profession elicited such acidulous comments as that of Hugh Miller, editor of the Free Church newspaper, the Witness:

> there exists no body of men among whom political feeling is more vivacious than among our Edinburgh lawyers. . . peculiarly on the legal profession in Scotland the dew of Government patronage descends. 19

Used injudiciously this patronage aroused intense hostility. A good example of this hostility was that caused by the exclusively legal composition of the Burgh Commission of 1834-1835, appointed by the Whig government to investigate the condition of the Scottish cities, "not a single banker or merchant having been named."[20] This instance of the professional partizanship of the Edinburgh

Whigs was of a kind which not only aroused the anger of the merchants but also directed that anger against the party which favoured the lawyers and was indeed led by them. In such ways were social rivalries translated into political rivalries. When the Whig party came to be seen by the middle class merchants as the 'clique' of the professional establishment those merchants were moved to form an anti-establishment party of their own.

Another issue which raised the same kind of jealousy and resentment and similarly exacerbated social tension was the matter of Parliamentary representatives. Although this will be discussed below in connection with specific elections, it can be noted here how frequently the complaint was raised by the merchants against the monopoly by Whig lawyers of the Parliamentary representation of the city. A Tory occasional pamphlet of 1834 stated that

> lawyers and merchants constitute the two great classes into which men of business in Edinburgh are divided. Each should, in common justice, have its own representative. . . . . it is fair enough that the Parliament House should have one representative, but utterly extravagant that it should have two. 21

It was in such demands as that for a greater slice of the patronage pie and for equal representation at Westminster that the merchant group after 1832 demonstrated a self-conscious desire to play a political role commensurate with their economic importance to the community. The political conflict engendered by this

social ambition was of great significance in Edinburgh after 1832.

Equally significant in the years from 1832 to 1852 was the religious element in Edinburgh politics. Indeed, towards the end of the period religious conflicts overshadowed the social conflict. Since the religious conflicts which became important in politics tended to develop along sectarian lines it is useful to establish the approximate numerical size of the sects in Edinburgh. The following table, based on the 1851 Religious Census, gives the percentage of attenders to population at the morning, afternoon and evening services of the major sects in Edinburgh and Leith, Glasgow and Scotland as a whole.[22]

	Edin. and Leith			Glasgow			Scotland		
	morn.	aft.	eve.	morn.	aft.	eve.	morn.	aft.	eve.
Est. Church	4.5	3.6	0.8	4.3	4.6	0.3	12.2	6.4	1.1
Free Church	7.9	8.3	2.3	4.8	4.1	1.0	10.1	6.9	2.2
United Pres.	6.6	7.8	0.6	4.7	5.2	1.4	5.5	5.1	1.1
Others	6.2	4.7	2.1	8.0	5.4	2.5	4.9	3.1	2.1
Totals	25.2	24.4	5.8	21.8	19.3	5.2	32.7	21.5	6.5

It is evident that the Established Church was much less well-attended in Edinburgh than in rural areas. Although its percentage of attenders to city population was about the same as that of the Glasgow Established Church, its Free Church and United Presbyterian competition was much stronger in Edinburgh than in Glasgow. The table suggests that the U.P.s were unusually strong in Edinburgh while the Free Church, though not so

popular as in some country districts, was better attended in Edinburgh than in Glasgow and far outstripped the Edinburgh Established Church in attendance figures. But the most striking aspect of the figures is the low total figures, indicating in Edinburgh's case, for instance, that approximately half of her population did not attend church at all. Summing up the pattern of religious attendance in 1867, the working class newspaper North Briton asserted that

> not counting the ladies, who form three-fourths of every congregation, it is chiefly the 'highly respectable', the 'unco guid' among men who are the regular attenders of church, and 'the people' are denounced for not attending. The people don't go; they won't go. 23

These 'highly respectable' citizens, most of whom must have been electors, were in a position after 1832 to bring religious viewpoints to bear upon political matters and to introduce religious issues into party politics. Religion was a very middle class preoccupation in Edinburgh, and, with a middle class electorate the main concern of this thesis, the chief religious groups must therefore be briefly examined in terms of their political interests and willingness to engage in politics as voters and politicians.

The Established Church's membership was derived mainly from Edinburgh's professional upper class and therefore its tone was both fashionable and conservative. The Established Church's conservatism was strengthened when the disruption of 1843 drew off many of the more politically liberal ministers and parishioners

to form the Free Church. After that event, the Conservative party was the Established Church's staunchest defender and the Edinburgh Presbytery maintained a strongly conservative position, in spite of the liberalizing efforts of its one prominent dissident -- Dr. Robert Lee.[24] There were, of course, many Whigs, such as Cockburn, Jeffrey, Sir James Gibson-Craig, etc., who remained in the Established Church after the disruption, but there was never any question in the period 1832-1852 of the general equation of the Established Church with Conservatives being altered.

An even more unalterable equation was that between the Roman Catholics of Edinburgh and the Whig party. Almost all Catholic voters were Irish shop-keepers who lived in the Old Town; they numbered approximately 100 in the 1830s.[25] They tended to vote *en bloc* for the Whigs; in the early 1830s there was some wavering due to the Whig coercion policy in Ireland, but from the time of O'Connell's visit to Edinburgh in 1835 until at least 1868, the Irish vote was solidly Whig. The anti-Maynooth and papal aggression excesses of the Liberals in Edinburgh effectively destroyed any potential links between the Irish and the Dissenters (who *inter alia* wanted the Irish Church disestablished).

The term Dissenter is usually taken to describe the presbyterian sects which stood outside the Established Church. But Congregationalists and Baptists were often included within this term; for instance, Adam Black, the Congregationalist, was

consistently described as a Dissenter throughout the period covered by this thesis. By far the largest group of Dissenters were the members of the United Secession Church which formed the great majority of the United Presbyterian Church, created in 1847 by the union of the United Secession and Relief Churches. In this thesis I have followed the practice of 19th century Scotsmen, who, when speaking of political matters, used the term Dissenter to cover all Protestant sects opposed to an established church, and, when speaking of ecclesiastical matters, used the term as a synonym for the Secessionists, Relief Churchmen and U.P.s.

The Edinburgh Dissenters, like those of other parts of Scotland and England, tended to be middle class, associated particularly with the merchant or craftsmen groups, thus paralleling the social division described above with a sectarian division. Most Dissenters were committed to voluntaryism, or complete separation between church and civil institutions. In Edinburgh this principle was stoutly maintained in the face of a peculiarly galling civic tax, called the annuity tax, which was a tax of six per cent on the rental of property within the Royalty, levied to provide the stipends of the Established Church clergy.[26] The tax was unique to Edinburgh and Montrose; tithes in the rural areas and seat rents in the cities were the normal sources of clerical income elsewhere in Scotland.[27] As various schemes to reform or abolish the tax foundered in Parliament, the tax

remained a constant irritant in Edinburgh politics, continually reviving the issue of establishment which might otherwise have played a less important role.[28]

Dissenters tended to be as radical in secular politics as they were in their concept of spiritual independence. A Dissenter periodical of 1838 attempted to explain the relationship:

> it is vain to attempt to disguise the fact that radicalism and voluntaryism are twin sisters. Voluntaryism is neither more nor less than radicalism in religion, and radicalism is just voluntaryism in politics . . . . Christian religion is a system of the rankest radicalism and the man who is ashamed of being called a radical, ought also to be ashamed of being called a Christian. [29]

This is not the place to investigate the origins of this association of political and religious radicalism (a phenomenon with roots extending back into the previous three centuries); it can only be noted as one of the most important aspects of early Victorian life in Edinburgh. The Parliamentary and municipal reforms of 1832-1833, so ardently desired by most Dissenters, provided the Dissenters with the means to bring more pressure against the Established Church,[30] and most Dissenters eagerly participated in political affairs after 1832. They were encouraged by the forthright examples of such Dissenter clergymen as Dr. Harper of North Leith Church who in the reform agitation of the 1830s, according to his biographer,

> did not hesitate to step forth from his clerical retirement, and, in addressing crowded political meetings, to give the

benefit of his moral influence and eloquence in helping on to triumph this beneficent revolution. [31]

As editor of the Edinburgh Theological Magazine (and later the U.P. Magazine), Harper was wont to remind his Dissenter readers that "by having the elective franchise conferred upon them..... they will acquire a political influence which they have not hitherto possessed!"[32] and to urge them to use that influence to promote not only disestablishment but also national education schemes and the abolition of all religious tests and the corn laws.

As those goals would suggest, the radicalism of the Edinburgh Dissenters was basically middle class, concerned with middle class grievances, and only occasionally did the Dissenters involve themselves with working class movements. Chartism was delicately received by the Dissenters, most of whom approved of some points of the Charter but discouraged violence and did not join the Chartist organizations.[33] But for a few prominent exceptions,[34] the Dissenters preferred to support such movements as the Cobdenite Parliamentary and Financial Reform Association of 1848-1849 or Hume's Little Charter. Firmly middle class, Manchester-oriented, untainted with demagogic violence, these movements appealed to the Dissenters who were basically not democrats but liberal reformers.

Among the politically important Dissenters of Edinburgh were members of the Peddie family. Rev. James Peddie (1759-1844) of Bristo Street Secession Church was a patriarchal

figure in the voluntary struggle.[35] His daughter, Barbara, married Dr. Harper of Leith, by whom she bore fifteen children, and his son, the Rev. William, succeeded his father at Bristo Street in 1844. Another son, James, a W.S., was closely involved in the political activities of the great Dissenter champion, Duncan McLaren (who will be considered in Chapter Two). Another clergyman with wide-ranging radical interests (such as free trade and the Complete Suffrage Union) was Dr. John Ritchie (1783-1869) of Potterrow Secession Church.[36] The annuity tax was attacked by all of the foregoing, but Dr. John Brown (1784-1858) of Broughton Street Secession Church took his opposition to the unusual length of refusing to pay his tax in 1837. Confiscation of personal belongings, imprisonment in Calton Gaol, the excoriations of Established Churchmen resulted and the furor only subsided when Brown moved outside the Royalty.[37] The Renton family, like the Peddie family, played an important part in Dissenter activities in Edinburgh. William Renton, a prosperous draper with a shop in Princes Street, was a radical Town Councillor in the 1830s; his wife, Agnes, while not otherwise engaged in the rearing of twelve children, pursued a variety of radical interests -- free trade, voluntaryism, Parliamentary reform, temperance, abolition of slavery, etc. -- by organizing church meetings on these matters or holding regular meetings of like-minded ladies in the Renton home at 22 Buccleuch Place.[38] One son, Henry, was the U.P.

minister at Kelso and a frequent cohort of Duncan McLaren's in many political struggles,[39] while a daughter, Christina, was McLaren's second wife from 1836 to 1841, when she died.[40]

It was in families like this that strong-minded Dissenters grew, imbibing good business techniques, vigorous religious habits, and keen political sensitivity from their serious-minded parents. Led spiritually by ministers of religion who did not scruple to bring religious principles to bear on political decisions and led politically by such clever and determined politicians as Duncan McLaren, the Edinburgh Dissenters were a unified, self-conscious political force with definite goals and definite ideas about how to achieve them. Informed by self-righteous piety, aggravated by a particular grievance which focused their religious discontent, and very aware of the significance of 1832, the Edinburgh Dissenters, like many of their brethren in other parts of Britain, were earnestly determined to take a new and important role in municipal affairs in the new age.

The only other religious group with an equal sense of purpose and power was the Non-Intrusionist, or eventually Free Church, group. This group is, however, considerably more difficult to describe since it included a variety of men who frequently differed among themselves over such matters as political allegiance. The Free Church in Edinburgh was almost exclusively middle and upper class, supported by large portions of the shopkeepers and industrious craftsmen as well as by a

significant section of the professions.[41] Such a comparatively disparate group did not have the political unity that the Dissenters had. Nor did the non-intrusion philosophy lead as automatically as Dissenter principles apparently did to certain political standpoints. The political Non-Intrusionist party, as it developed in Edinburgh, remained remarkably vague on all matters but loyalty to itself, and its character depended therefore very much upon whoever was in charge of its affairs at any given moment.

Zeal in the Free Church tended to run along certain limited paths -- first and foremost enthusiasm for the Free Church itself whose success in gaining adherents and building new churches and a new parochial system was, indeed, a triumph in zeal without many parallels in the 19th century. Left-over energy was generally devoted to such enterprises as sabbatarianism and no-Popery, both basically middle class movements. No-Popery in its most virulent form caught the Free Church's fancy at such times as the Maynooth and papal aggression crises and the Irish portion of Edinburgh's working class were subjected to a sustained proselytization campaign designed to wean them from the scarlet woman.[42] The Revs. Begg, Cunningham and Candlish were at the forefront of both the No-Popery and sabbatarian movements and they could count on the majority of the Free Church following them wherever they might lead in the great struggle against the despoilers of the holy Sabbath and the disciples of the Anti-Christ.

Why the Free Church was so prone to hysterical agitations in aid of causes of so negative a character is a fascinating question which a social psychologist might be best qualified to answer. But the great Free Church champion, Hugh Miller, editor of the Witness, supplied part of the answer when he remarked in 1839 that the Non-Intrusionists "differ as much among themselves on minor points as they do from their opponents on the truly important ones".[43] When most of the important points were resolved in 1843, the many disagreements over once-minor points assumed a much greater importance, preventing the Free Churchmen from cooperating closely except to defend the Church against her sectarian enemies, the Sabbath breakers and the Pope.

The political background to the Free Church was complex. In the 1830s, the Evangelical wing of the Established Church was led by Thomas Chalmers, a deeply conservative man whose Committee on Church Extension expected favour from the Tory party.[44] These Evangelicals were, however, bitterly disappointed when the Conservative party rejected the Non-Intrusionist demands and pursued a neutral policy which could not avert the disruption of 1843.[45] Neither the Whigs nor the Conservatives had served the Non-Intrusionists' purposes and this left party loyalties of the new Free Church to be determined by individual preference. The fact that most Free Churchmen were middle class city-dwellers or lower class rural tenants led inevitably to the majority of the Free Churchmen being Whig or Liberal.

But it is sometimes forgotten just how various were the political loyalties of the Free Churchmen in a city as diverse as Edinburgh.

From 1840, Non-Intrusionist Tories stood in Town Council elections and were an important minority voice in the Edinburgh party. In fact, during the 1856 Parliamentary election, in the absence of a Conservative candidate, the chairman of the Tory Committee, Alexander Pringle, a Free Churchman, attempted to swing Conservative support to the Liberal candidate, another Free Churchman. His plan backfired and he was forced into retirement after the election by the disgruntled majority of Established Church Conservatives. But the incident shows the interesting degree of Free Church participation in Edinburgh Conservative party affairs. Some very prominent Whigs, such as Fox Maule and Murray Dunlop, were anxious to deliver the Free Church into the Whig fold, but their attempts were never wholly successful. Many Whigs were reluctant to see their party attached exclusively to the Free Church and even more important was the determined resistance of many Free Churchmen to becoming the tools of secular politicians. This resistance was led by Hugh Miller of the Witness.[46]

With Miller in command of Scotland's most phenomenally successful newspaper of the 1840s,[47] the party which the Witness chose to support could look forward to favour from a large section of the Free Church. But Miller, whose basic political

instincts were those of a conservative Whig, was indifferent to the secular parties. He wrote once: "my real party principles are those of the Free Church of Scotland".[48] Throughout his years as editor, Miller showed little interest in purely political matters, and when religious issues acquired political importance he approached them with a fine disdain for party considerations. Undoubtedly Miller's doughty independence was of immense importance in keeping the Free Church group free from any formal connection with any secular party.

But there was yet one more Free Church group, led by the Rev. James Begg in the 1840s and early 1850s, which was radical in its secular politics and in its inclinations towards voluntaryism.[49] The voice of this radical Free Church group from 1847 was the Edinburgh News, whose popularity came to rival the Witness's and whose viewpoints on the annuity tax, Parliamentary reform, and the benefits of joining with the Dissenters in an electoral alliance were in starkly liberal contrast to that of the Witness.[50] Some of the Free Churchmen for whom the Edinburgh News spoke included Archibald Kerr, convener of the mainly Dissenter Anti-Annuity Tax League of the late 1840s, and David Dickson, who was criticized by many of his sect for his work on behalf of Duncan McLaren's 1851 campaign for Lord Provost.[51] While most of the Free Churchmen followed Miller and Rev. Candlish in continuing to support the establishment principle, a significant minority confused the already complex variety

of Free Church positions with this radical voluntaryism.

Thus, the Free Church was subject to the influence of various men and groups who could agree on little but the integrity of the Free Church and a militant Protestantism. On all other matters there was disagreement and rivalry between sections and personalities. Strong personalities like Rev. Candlish were able to rally majority support for certain controversial policies, but usually only by passionate appeals not to the inherent worth of a scheme but to the proud loyalty of the faithful to the concept of the Free Church.[52] This rather mercurial but passionate spirit was reflected in Free Churchmen's politics. Without any strong party connection, although we have seen there were numbers of Free Church Tories and Free Church Whigs, the bulk of the Free Church party in Edinburgh was a floating mass of electors with vaguely liberal feelings. As in purely ecclesiastical matters, so in political affairs, the Free Churchmen were peculiarly responsive to the sense of their own superiority and therefore they often took independent political action, putting forward candidates for office and supporting them mainly on their qualifications not as liberals or conservatives, but as Free Churchmen. There was little consistency in the opinions of the various Free Church candidates upon such non-ecclesiastical matters as the ballot or franchise reform, and there was even considerable variety in their views on establishment and the annuity tax (see chapters below). It is clear that most Free Church voters did not wonder

at these discrepancies, apparently regarding candidates' secular opinions as much less important than their denominational loyalty and hostility towards the Pope. This shifting, not to say shifty, aspect of their political behaviour made it extremely difficult and eventually impossible for any other political party to arrange a permanent alliance with the Free Church party.

The attempt of the Dissenters to unite politically with their old Evangelical enemies is a major theme of the chapters which follow. It appeared to some Dissenters very logical that some sort of union should follow the disruption, which they interpreted as a triumph of the voluntary principle. With both sects united now in opposition to the Established Church, the time was propitious, according to Rev. Robertson of the Portsburgh Secessionist Church in a conciliatory pamphlet of 1843, for reconciliation and friendly cooperation: "no doubt they will still be Churchmen in principle and we Voluntaries, but we must not fight about abstractions". [53] But of course to the Free Churchmen, the abstract Free Church principle was the guiding ideal and they were not about to forget that a purified establishment was the ultimate end of non-intrusionism. Indeed, as Non-Intrusionists before the disruption, leaders such as Rev. Candlish had taken pains to point out that however the patronage issue might be resolved, Non-Intrusionists would remain opposed to voluntaryism. In 1840, Candlish wrote:

> the principle which allows and requires a civil recognition of religion is sound and scriptural. Even were we obliged reluctantly to abandon the Established Church of Scotland as indefensible, we would defend the doctrine of establishments, notwithstanding. [54]

And after the disruption, Candlish continued to speak for the majority of Free Churchmen when he proclaimed at the second Free Church Assembly of October 1843:

> we do not see, we never have seen, and trust never will see, that the movement we have made is at all a step in advance to the Voluntary principle. On the contrary, our conviction is that never in any age of the Christian Church has a more decided, a more substantial, a more effectual, testimony been lifted up for the duty of the magistrate. [55]

The retention of the establishment principle by the mass of the Free Church party (excepting the minority for whom the Edinburgh News spoke) and above all the retention of a corporate pride which made it difficult to forget the transgressions of old voluntaries like McLaren effectively prevented a permanent alliance of Free Churchmen and Dissenters. The electoral coalition of 1846-1847 was the lone exception in Edinburgh politics to the usual sorry record of Dissenter-Free Church bickering, mistrust and jealousy.

"Naples has its Vesuvius, with its sullen rumblings, and fiery emissions, and perpetual bitter smoke. Edinburgh has its Vesuvius , too, in the shape of the Annuity Tax". [56] The annuity tax remained a constant source of conflict in Edinburgh between 1832 and 1852 and beyond because it was an issue which irritated in religious, social and political ways. In briefly

describing these ways, the themes of this chapter can be easily recapitulated.

The annuity tax was intolerable to any voluntary for ecclesiastical reasons; but there was a curious aspect of the tax which lent this religious grievance sharp social significance. An act of 1535 granting exemptions to judges from paying all burgh taxes was extended in 1687 to "all their servants, all advocates, writers to the signet, and others who compose the College of Justice".[57] Moreover, citizens with less than a £5 annual property valuation were in practice exempted from payment of the annuity tax.[58] With the generally well-to-do suburban residents, the poor of the city centre and the affluent legal profession all free of obligation, the annuity tax was regarded by the middle class as an "intolerable . . . burden on the mercantile and trading classes of the community",[59] especially since many merchants paid twice, once on their house and once on their shop. And of course it was well-known that the bulk of the Dissenters were middle class which led to the resentful complaint that the Dissenter middle class was subsidizing the churches of the exempted lawyers. Before the 1851 Parliamentary Select Committee on the Annuity Tax, Duncan McLaren simplified the social issue by declaring:

> in Edinburgh the aristocracy are the lawyers; they occupy the highest rented houses, and they are exempted; they are the parties who chiefly remain in the Established

> Church. The poor, and what has been called the shopocracy, have almost all left the church; the effect therefore is, that the annuity tax is levied in Edinburgh on the poorer classes to support an establishment for the rich. 60

Thus, the social conflict between the professional establishment and the aspiring middle class was intensified and complicated by the sectarian struggle between the Established Churchmen and the Dissenters over the annuity tax issue. This conflict became further complicated after the disruption when the Free Church became as critical of the Established Church as the Dissenters, but for crucially different reasons. The annuity tax became a measure of the gap between the Dissenters and the Free Church insofar as it showed most Free Churchmen unwilling to abandon the establishment principle. Although the Free Churchmen objected to the clergymen and Church which were the recipients of the tax, they would not join the Dissenters in attacking the principle of the tax. Partly, therefore, due to differences exposed by the annuity tax, the two most powerful middle class dissident groups in Edinburgh failed to unite in their attack upon their common enemies. Deprived of the ally which was necessary if the middle class radicals were to end the political dominance of the establishment, the middle class attempt to resolve the social conflict with the professional elite was badly delayed until at least thirteen years after 1852. In this way, the annuity tax shows the complexity of political feeling in early Victorian Edinburgh,

with social and religious countercurrents creating whirlpools of dissent and conflict through which the historian must proceed warily.

No other large British city had to contend with an annuity tax, but the socio-religious passions and prejudices which animated the controversy surrounding the annuity tax were by no means unique to Edinburgh. The Edinburgh controversy was just a single variation on some very general themes of early Victorian Britain, such as the conflict over spiritual independence and establishment, defined and complicated by sectarian and social rivalry. Even the tax itself had an English counterpart in the church rates which provided a similar opportunity for equal acrimony within English communities. Perhaps Edinburgh was a little more preoccupied with religious matters in these years than other British cities, partly because her working class was less numerous and less disruptive than that of comparable cities, and partly because Edinburgh's slow but steady economic growth did not present overwhelming social problems or lead to disastrous fluctuations in prosperity. With the reform issues settled in 1832-1833, the only other major secular issue to trouble the middle and upper class electorate was free trade, and in a city of few industries that issue could only rarely compete favourably with such attractive issues as the annuity tax and the Maynooth Grant.

In religious issues and terms there lurked, of course, the

political struggle, which was proceeding in other British cities, between an aspiring middle class of shopkeepers and merchants and a professional elite. The political conflict merged with the religious conflict, not only during elections but in the minds of men as well until, as Dr. Kitson Clark has written, "by the second quarter of the nineteenth century religion had received so political a shape, or politics so religious a shape, that it was for many people almost impossible to separate the two."[61] Religious beliefs, social standing, political principles and loyalties -- all seem to have both an existence and meaning of their own as well as the function of defining for an individual his place within a community. We cannot presume to know precisely at which times these things assumed their different kinds of importance to different people, but we can suggest, in chapters, such as the following how the social and religious groups acted and reacted on a conscious, historical level. In the process, the outlines of Edinburgh society in particular and Victorian society in general should grow a little sharper.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE

1. For excellent short socio-economic profiles of Edinburgh in the period 1800 to 1870, based on census summaries, see L.J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy (Edinburgh, 1950), Part II, chapter 1, and the introduction of I. MacDougall, The Minutes of the Edinburgh Trades Council, 1858-1873 (Edinburgh, 1968).

2. Until adequate research into the economic structure of Edinburgh is made, D. Bremner's comments in The Industries of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1869) remain the major source for Edinburgh's industries. In 1869, Bremner wrote that Edinburgh "is not likely to become a manufacturing centre in the common meaning of the word . . . . It is, however, well adapted to become a seat of light artistic occupations, and many such are carried out in it" (p. 131).

3. The following population figures are taken from B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, Abstract of British Historical Statistics (Cambridge, 1962), p. 24. The figures for Edinburgh include Leith, those for Glasgow include the environs later incorporated into the city. The figures are in thousands.

	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861
Edinburgh	103	138	162	166	194	203
Glasgow	101	147	212	287	363	443

3. (cont'd)
The apparently small increase in Edinburgh's population in 1841 was due to the choice as census day of a local holiday in June when many people were not at home (T. Thorburn, Statistical Analysis of the City of Edinburgh, 1851 (Edinburgh, 1851), pp. 7-8).

4. For a survey of the relative strength and numbers of the different occupational groups in Edinburgh, based on a comparison of the 1835 and 1866 voters' rolls, see Appendix I.

5. H. Cockburn, Memorials of His Time (Edinburgh, 1856), p. 170.

6. The social warfare between these two groups is an involved subject which I have neglected in concentrating on the political aspects of the rivalry. A minute investigation of marriage patterns, private letters, biographies, newspapers, etc. might suggest the kinds of social prejudice and distinctive behaviour of the two classes. For the purposes of this thesis one can only allude to the social rivalry while analyzing the political repercussions.

7. Individual circumstances naturally differ, but the general outlines are strikingly similar. For Birmingham, see C. Gill, History of Birmingham, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1952), Vol. I, chapters XVI and XVII, and especially election of 1844, pp. 404-405; for Leicester, see A.T. Patterson, Radical Leicester, A History of Leicester, 1780-1850 (Leicester, 1954), chapters XIII and XVI, especially pp. 248, 241-243; for Nottingham, see R.A. Church,

7. (cont'd)
Economic and Social Change in a Midland Town, Victorian Nottingham, 1815-1900 (London, 1966), especially pp. 218-219.

8. The most obvious example of this advocacy was the outspoken pro-reform resolutions passed in the Edinburgh Merchant Company during the 1820s. See Cockburn, Memorials, pp. 350-351; A. Heron, The Rise and Progress of the Company of Merchants of the City of Edinburgh, 1681-1902 (Edinburgh, 1903), p. 170 ff. For permission to read the minutes of the Company from 1830 to 1868, I owe thanks to the Company and its Secretary, Founded in 1681, the Merchant Company's functions by the mid-nineteenth century were limited to administering several schools, charities and insurance schemes for members, its right to exclusive trading privileges having long since become obsolete (Reports from Commissioners, Corporations (Scotland): General Report and Local Reports, Parliamentary Papers, 1835, Vol. XXIX, p. 320). Membership, which averaged about 500 in the period 1832-1868, was open to all guild-brethren without restrictions on occupation, but the entrance and annual dues were sufficiently high to keep the Company composed mainly of the most prosperous merchants and tradesmen (Heron, Company of Merchants, p. 200). The liberal Whigs and Dissenter shopocracy continued to use Merchant Company meetings and petitions to Parliament as a means of communicating their hopes and desires to all who might take notice. As an institution, however, the Company never played a major role in

8. (cont'd)

constituency politics.

9. Once again, the activities of another middle class organization, the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, reflect this concern. John Wigham, the chairman of the Edinburgh Anti-Corn Law Association, and chairman of the Chamber of Commerce in 1835-1836, had the Chamber regularly passing free trade petitions to Parliament from 1834 (Minute Book No.4, 28th January 1834). For permission to consult the Chamber of Commerce minutes, I owe thanks to the Chamber. The Chamber was founded in 1785 by a rich Edinburgh banker, David Steuart, and given a royal charter in 1786. Any merchant, manufacturer or trader in Scotland could become a member by paying a two guinea admission fee and a guinea annual fee. For these and other details, see "Brief Historical Account of the Chamber" in Two Lectures Delivered Before the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, privately printed (Edinburgh, 1859). Like the Merchant Company, the Chamber had no political function but was dominated by the more advanced middle class who issued various liberal demands under its name. Membership rose from 74 in 1835 to 240 in 1852.

10. For the financial rewards of successful advocates, see G.W.T. Omond, The Lord Advocates of Scotland (Second Series, 1834-1880, (London, 1914), pp. 50-51, 129.

11. The Edinburgh Review, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine

11. (cont'd)
and latterly the North British Review featured the reviews and contributions of many lawyers. In 1861 John Heiton numbered among the Faculty of Advocates ninety-two authors, whose works ranged from political economy to animal magnetism (J. Heiton, The Castes of Edinburgh, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh, 1861), p. 158.

12. J.G. Lockhart, Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1819), Vol. II, p. 3.

13. J. Watt, John Inglis, Lord Justice-General of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1893), p. 47. For a discussion of the social background and social significance of lawyers in Edinburgh, see N.T. Phillipson, The Scottish Whigs and the Reform of the Court of Session, 1785-1830 (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge: 1967), especially Chapter I. There was a marked decline after 1832 in the number of lawyers, partly due to natural adjustment after a period of great expansion earlier in the century. There was simultaneously a decline in the amount of litigation and, according to some, a decline in the quality of the judges and advocates. For descriptions of the decline and mediocrity of the bar, see Heiton, Castes, pp. 159-160, and H. Cockburn, Journal of Henry Cockburn, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1874), Vol. II, pp. 226-230. The growth of sheriff courts through the 1850s and the comparative cheapness of shrieval justice were big factors in the decline of cases. Nevertheless, this decline was only relative and did not seriously threaten to upset the social position of the

13. (cont'd)
legal profession.

14. For a fuller explanation of these matters, see "The Scottish System of Government", Chapter Three of H.J. Hanham, Scottish Nationalism (London, 1969).

15. For permission to consult and quote from the minute books of their societies, I owe thanks to the Clerk of Faculty and the Faculty of Advocates, the Clerk and the Librarian of the Writers to H.M. Signet, and the Secretary, the Council and the Keeper of the Library of the Society of Solicitors in the Supreme Courts of Scotland. The official activities and deliberations of these bodies as recorded in their minutes were almost exclusively professional. The examination and certification of intrants, petitions to Parliament on judicial and legal legislation and administration of various charities and insurance funds were the normal kinds of business. The officers of these legal bodies were selected usually on the basis of professional eminence, Whig and Tory lawyers cooperating as professionals, apparently without rancour or conflict.

16. Heiton knew of twenty-five advocates in 1861 who were or had been M.P.s (Castes, p. 158).

17. My research has not been extensive enough in geographical or personal terms to be able to describe adequately the extent of the Whig lawyers' control over Whig party affairs in the whole of

17. (cont'd)
Scotland. To establish the general nature of this situation would require in the first place a much more thorough and far-ranging investigation of the family papers of Whig magnates than I was able to carry out.

18. The radical Tait's Edinburgh Magazine which kept a close watch on these matters reported in August 1834 that the legal positions filled by government appointment included thirty sheriff deputeships, forty-eight sheriff-substituteships , four principal clerkships, four jury-clerkships, four advocate-deputeships and miscellaneous offices in Register House and the Exchequer (p. 442). For the role of certain important Whigs in this, see H. Cockburn, Letters Chiefly Concerned with the Affairs of Scotland (London, 1874), passim, and Sir James Gibson-Craig's letters to Fox Maule in the SRO (Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628). The latter mention an extraordinary variety of posts for which Gibson-Craig was involved in recommending applicants; a few of them were inspectors of factories, secretaries to law commissioners and law courts, agents for various government boards and colonial appointments. Such matters form the bulk of Lord Advocate Moncreiff's extant correspondence with Aberdeen during the latter's premiership (BM, Aberdeen MSS, Add. MS 43201).

19. Quoted in P. Bayne, The Life and Letters of Hugh Miller, 2 vols. (London, 1871), Vol. II, p. 275.

20. Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, September 1833, p. 813.

21. The Citizen, 21st May 1834. The use of this argument by Tories is explained by the fact that their candidate, John Learmonth, was a coach-maker hoping to capitalize on the resentment of the liberal middle class with whom he shared few other sympathies than their common jealousy of the political power of the Whig lawyers. For details see Chapter Three below.

22. These figures are based on the information in Religious Census of 1851, Parliamentary Papers, 1854, Vol. LIX. It should be noted that the census was voluntary and that numbers of ministers chose not to cooperate. Moreover, the figures were submitted without proof by the ministers, many of whom no doubt made only rough estimates in which wishful thinking might well have played a part. Hence, the Scottish religious census can be treated with even less statistical respect than its imperfect English counterpart whose unreliability is well known.

23. North Briton, 1st May 1867. The pattern of working class attendance in Edinburgh was probably not unlike that of most other Victorian cities. In his evidence before the Select Committee on the Annuity Tax, the clerk of the Canongate said of this very poor and populous district that half the people did not go to church. Of the other half two thirds went to Dissenter and Roman Catholic chapels, while only one third went to the Established Church. He regarded these figures as representative for all

23. (cont'd)
the poor districts of the city and was corroborated by other witnesses. See, in Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax (Edinburgh), Parliamentary Papers, 1851, Vol. VII, evidence of William Fraser W.S., clerk of Canongate (pp. 334-335), Robert Disher, treasurer of Canongate (p. 345) and Rev. A.R. Bonar, minister of Canongate Established Church (p. 357). The Roman Catholic attendance was composed mainly of Irish immigrants while the Dissenters' hold upon the working class was by no means certain: large numbers of lower class members of Dissenter chapels apparently deserted them for Chartist churches in 1839-1840 (United Secession Magazine, February 1841, pp. 134-136). See A.A. Maclaren, "Presbyterianism and the working class in a mid-nineteenth century city" in the Scottish Historical Review, Vol. XLVI (1967), for a description of the variety of subtle pressures set up by the mainly middle class churches against the inclusion of working men in any church activities except educational ones.

24. When Dr. Robert Lee arrived in Edinburgh in 1843 to be minister of Old Greyfriars, "Dr. Barclay was then the only Liberal in the Presbytery. Almost all the rest were of the most Conservative type in mind and policy" (R. Story, Life and Remains of Robert Lee, 2 vols. (London, 1870), Vol. I, p. 88). Dr. Thomas Barclay (1792-1873) was a Parliamentary reporter for the Times (London) from 1818 to 1822 and after ordination was presented to Currie Church in 1844 by Sir James Gibson-Craig

24. (cont'd)
who had the gift of the ministry. From 1858, he was principal of Glasgow University (DNB, Vol. I, pp. 1092-1093). The remarkable Dr. Lee struggled for twenty-five years to moderate his Presbytery's rigid support of Sabbath observance, rabid denunciations of Popery and unyielding opposition to national secular education. Probably only death prevented his being expelled from his Church for his innovations in worship (see Story, Lee, Vol. II, for his involved disputes with his own church).

25. Scotsman, 22nd December 1832.

26. The Royalty was the area inside the old city boundary excluding such suburban districts as Newington, Morningside and much of what is now called Fountainbridge and the West End. For details of the taxation system, see Shaw Lefevre's Report on the Edinburgh Annuity Tax, Parliamentary Papers, 1849, Vol. XLVI, especially pp. 4-13. In 1833, out of £12.16s.6d. paid in rates for a house assessed at £32 per annum, the annuity tax came to £1.12s.8d., and out of £34.4s.6d on a place of business assessed at £170 per annum, the annuity tax amounted to £9.10s.0d. (J. Anderson, A History of Edinburgh to 1850 (Edinburgh, 1856), p. 430). But the amount of the annuity tax collected varied every year and the ministers' salaries fluctuated likewise (Digest of Reports of the Commissioners of Religious Instruction in Scotland (Edinburgh, 1838), Part II, Appendix, p. 6).

27. Ibid., pp. 7-8. In Glasgow there were proportionally fewer churches and the clergy's income at about £400 was about £200 less than those of the Edinburgh clergy. The Town Council there was quite ruthless in keeping seat rents high in order to avoid dipping into the municipal treasury to maintain the clergy. (Statements Relative to the City of Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1833), pp. 28-30.

28. John Sinclair, Edinburgh's Town Clerk, testified to the 1851 Select Committee on the Annuity Tax that "there is no more powerful lever used by the Dissenters of Edinburgh against the Established Church, than the fact of the existence of this annuity tax" (Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax (Edinburgh), p. 53). And the U.P. Magazine agreed that "nothing has maintained the Voluntary spirit in Edinburgh so efficiently as the annuity tax. It was an excellent running sore, and kept up a healthy irritation in the system, which had a natural tendency to repose" (November 1851, p. 528).

29. Voluntary Church Magazine, August 1838, pp. 363, 364.

30. The Established Churchmen were quick to note the relationship between the Reform Act of 1832 and voluntaryism: "What has the Reform Bill to do with the matter? Answer. The very equivocal compliment is paid to it by Dissenters, of considering it a species of Juggernaut idol, dragged on by the rulers of the nation, and guided, amidst their shoals and protestations, to crush beneath

30. (cont'd)
its wheels the best and holiest institutions of the land" (A Catechism on the Voluntary Church Association by a Member of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1833), p. 11).

31. Rev. A. Thomson, Life of Principal Harper, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1881), pp. 101-102.

32. Edinburgh Theological Magazine, February 1832, p. 71.

33. Thus the Voluntary Church Magazine of 1839 asserted its support for universal suffrage, shorter Parliaments and the ballot, but advised the Chartists to unite in one 'phalanx' with the middle class, dismissing their dishonest and vainglorious English leaders on the way (November 1839, p. 511).

34. A Congregationalist magistrate, J.H. Stott, introduced Chartist demands in the Edinburgh Town Council in 1848 (see Chapter Six below) while John Dunlop of Brockloch, who represented Edinburgh at the London conference of the Anti-State Church Association in 1844 and sat on its national executive committee, was also president of the Edinburgh Complete Suffrage Union. See Proceedings of the First Anti-State Church Conference (1844), Liberation Society Papers, London County Record Office, A/LIB/275; Scotsman, 13th April 1844.

35. A brief biographical sketch by his son, William, is included in Discourses by the late Rev. James Peddie, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1846).

36. W. Marwick, "Social Heretics in the Scottish Churches", Records of the Scottish Church History Society, Vol. XI, (1955), p. 231; A. Wilson, The Chartist Movement in Scotland, 2 vols. (unpublished D. Phil. thesis, University of Oxford: 1951), Vol. II, pp. 369-372. Wilson's thesis has been published in briefer form as The Chartist Movement in Scotland (Manchester, 1970).

37. For Brown's life and other radical activities, see J. Cairns Memoir of John Brown, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1860).

38. Rev. H. Renton, Memorial of Mrs. Agnes Renton, privately printed (Edinburgh, 1866).

39. J.B. Mackie, The Life and Work of Duncan McLaren, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1888), Vol. I, p. 233 n; see also Memorials of the Rev. Henry Renton (Kelso, 1877).

40. Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 40-43.

41. Like the Edinburgh Dissenters, the Edinburgh Free Churchmen made only token working class converts. The most prominent Edinburgh Free Churchmen to concern themselves with the working class were Rev. James Begg and Dr. Thomas Guthrie; the official, but by no means wholly satisfactory biographies for these men are T. Smith, Memoirs of James Begg, D.D., 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1885-1888), and D. and C. Guthrie, (eds), Autobiography and Memoir of Thomas Guthrie (London, 1877). The evidence suggests, however, that their commitment was personal and the exception rather than the rule with Free Church-

41.(cont'd).
men in general.

42. The Edinburgh Irish Mission was from its beginnings in 1848 directly under the control of the Edinburgh Free Church Presbytery and the convener was the Rev. James Begg. For the adminstrative details of the Edinburgh Irish Mission, see Free Church Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes in the SRO, especially CH 3/111/25, 6th December 1848, and CH 3/111/26, 3rd October 1849. By the late 1850s the Mission had become the Protestant Institute and from the Cowgate its premises had shifted up to George IV Bridge to a handsome new building which it shared with the Scottish Reformation Society. The latter was another middle class society dedicated to the curtailment of Popery whose members were mostly Free Churchmen. Although Dissenters and Established Churchmen participated in the organizations to some extent, Free Churchmen were the most ardent no-Popery zealots in Edinburgh (Rev. D. Jamie, John Hope, Philanthropist and Reformer (Edinburgh, 1900), p. 75). Such pressure groups are discussed in detail in Chapter Six below .

43. Letter (20th November 1839) to Robert Paul: New College MS MH 3/5, No. 127.

44. "The most prominent advocates of Church Extension regarded Conservatism and their cause as one" (Smith, Begg, Vol. I, p. 346). See Guthrie, Autobiography, p. 171 ff., for the

44. (cont'd)
hostility of the Church Extensionists towards the Whigs.

45. For details, see Rev. W. Hanna, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, 4 vols. (Edinburgh, 1849-1852), Vol. III (1851) and Vol. IV (1852); G.D. Henderson, Heritage: A Study of the Disruption (Edinburgh, 1943); Omond, Lord Advocates (Second Series), p. 50 ff.

46. For Miller, see Bayne, Miller. For his life until 1840 see a fascinating copybook of his letters to a variety of correspondents in New College Library, Edinburgh: MS MH 3/5. Unfortunately, the book ends at the time of Miller's arrival in Edinburgh to edit the Witness and no other copybook for his later life exists.

47. From an initial circulation in 1840 of some 800, the Witness's circulation grew to some 3,400 by 1843; the next most popular newspaper in Edinburgh at this time was the Scotsman at 2,300 in 1843 (R.M.W. Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland (Glasgow, 1946), p. 170).

48. Quoted in Bayne, Miller, Vol. II, p. 278. He described politics as "the most difficult of all sciences" (letter (late 1834?) to Miss Dunbar of Boath: New College MS MH 3/5, No. 125). Not long before he took up his editorial post in Edinburgh he wrote Murray Dunlop, one of the organizers of the Witness: "of politics, properly so called, I know only a little. One thing I know,

48. (cont'd)
however, that the two great parties divide pretty equally between them the rascality of the country, and that a bad office-holding Whig is exceedingly like a bad office-holding Tory . . . . I began life a Whig and a Whig I shall end it" (letter (10th September 1839): New College MS MH 3/5, No. 120).

49. It was only in the 1860s that Rev. Begg became an uncompromising Tory utterly opposed to the union of the United Presbyterian and Free Churches.

50. There are no details of this in Smith's superficial biography of Begg. Therefore, see W. Norrie, Edinburgh Newspapers, Past and Present (Edinburgh, 1891), p. 21, and Cowan, Newspaper in Scotland, p. 283. The News had always been liberal before, advocating voluntaryism and supporting McLaren in the 1840s. It came under the control of McLaren's Liberals again between 1858 and 1860. It is only available in the BM Newspaper Library, Colindale, London, and the file there extends from 1848 to 1860. McLaren described it in a letter of 1853 to Gladstone as "a more decidedly radical paper and has a much larger circulation than any other Edinburgh paper" (letter (1st October, 1853): BM, Gladstone MSS, Add. MS 44376). For bringing this and other letters from McLaren to Gladstone to my attention, I owe thanks to Mr. I.G.C. Hutchison.

51. "Many Free Churchmen stood aloof from me". See

51. (cont'd)
Dickson's diaries (from the 1830s through the 1860s with many gaps) and some autobiographical writings in the EPL (Y DA 1820 D55). The latter are a small, loose collection of papers without any pagination or dates, from which the above quotation was extracted. Nothing daunted by this aloofness, Dickson stood successfully for the Town Council in 1852 and served with distinction (he was elected city treasurer in 1853) until he retired in 1859.

52. The Free Church Education Scheme is the prime example of this; see D. Withrington, "The Free Church Educational Scheme, 1843-50", Records of the Scottish Church History Society, Vol. XV (1964).

53. Rev. J. Robertson, The Past Conduct and Present Duty of Dissenters Towards Their Non-Intrusion Brethren (Edinburgh, 1843), p. 14.

54. Rev. R.S. Candlish, Friendly Address to the Dissenters of Scotland by Ministers of the Established Church (Edinburgh, 1840), p. 3.

55. Quoted in W. Wilson, Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1880), p. 317.

56. R. Rainy and J. Mackenzie, Life of William Cunningham (London, 1871), p. 95.

57. The Inhabitants' Committee, Address to the Citizens of

57. (cont'd)
Edinburgh on the Subject of Annuity and Impost Taxes (Edinburgh, n. d.), p. 6.

58. Report on the Edinburgh Annuity Tax, p. 4; see also evidence of Walter Malcolm, law agent for Edinburgh Church of Scotland Presbytery, to the Select Committee of 1851 in Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax (Edinburgh), pp. 472-473.

59. The Inhabitants' Committee, Report of the Sub-Committee Appointed by the Inhabitants' Committee (Edinburgh, 1832) p. 10.

60. Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax (Edinburgh), p. 286. McLaren exaggerated the burden on the poor but effectively portrayed the resentment of the 'shopocracy'.

61. G. Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England (London, 1962), p. 162. Or put in another way by D.W. Urwin: "religion did not present an intrusion into politics, but was an essential force in the social environment within which politics and politicians had to operate" ("Conservative Party Organisation in Scotland until 1912" in Scottish Historical Review, Vol. XLIV (1965), p. 91).

CHAPTER TWO

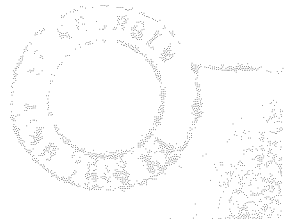
Political Groups in Early Victorian Edinburgh

In this chapter, background information necessary for an understanding of the complicated political events of early Victorian Edinburgh will be presented. In particular the social background, party principles and leading personalities of the Conservatives, Whigs, Liberals and Free Churchmen will be examined briefly. In the course of the research for this thesis, evidence bearing upon the costs, corruption and other aspects of electioneering has come to light; because of its fragmentary and technical nature, this information has been placed in Appendix II. The first part of this chapter deals with the new electoral framework created by the reforms of 1832-1833.

The map of Edinburgh in 1848 (in pocket inside back cover) shows the boundaries of the Parliamentary constituency established by the Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832; it also shows the five electoral districts of the corporation of Edinburgh as established by the Municipal Corporations Act (Scotland) of 1833. The first act gave the vote to occupiers and owners of buildings or lands of the yearly value of £10.[1] Those who qualified as voters in the first act were also entitled to vote in the municipal elections for the Town Council if their property was within the much smaller Royalty of Edinburgh.[2] There were thus approximately 5,000 Parliamentary voters and 3,500 municipal voters. The

nature of the five municipal districts varied in political persuasion from left to right, the First and Second, comprising middle and working class districts in the Old Town, being more liberal or radical while the New Town districts were more conservative, especially the Fifth, centred on the elite neighbourhood of Charlotte Square. The radical vote was stronger in municipal elections because the largely moderate vote of the prosperous suburbs outside the Royalty was only operative in Parliamentary elections and because small district voting naturally leads to more representative results. Each voter now cast two votes to elect Edinburgh's two M.P.s in place of the one M.P. formerly elected by the self-perpetuating Town Council. The new Council consisted of thirty-one councillors elected from the five districts (six from each district and seven from the Fourth) and two extra councillors -- the Dean of Guild and the Convener of the Incorporated Trades. The Lord Provost was elected by the Town Council from among its members and his normal term of office was three years, but it was often extended.[3] Councillors were elected for terms of three years and each year a third of the councillors were up for re-election.

The Old Town Councillors were mainly tradesmen and merchants and as the Burgh Commissioners of 1835 reported about the new Town Councillors, "the great majority are still of the same class of which it was formerly composed".[4] A survey of the occupations of the councillors elected in 1833, 1840 and 1851



(all of which were hotly contested elections) shows that the Town Councillors reflected the diversity of Edinburgh's economy; no one occupation dominated the Council, but in general the craftsmen and retailers formed the majority (see Appendix III). The radical First District consistently elected more tradesmen and manufacturers than the Fifth District which tended to elect more 'gentlemen', lawyers and professional men. In general, therefore, the Town Council was upper middle class and non-professional and the 1833 Act had approximately the same result as the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act had in cities like Leeds, as described by Dr. E.P. Hennock: "the really striking change that had taken place in the composition of the Council, apart from its party complexion, was not social, it was religious".[5] In Edinburgh the Town Council became the rendezvous of Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists where Moderate Churchmen had prevailed before. The Tories became the minority party, but the liberal majority was split by the 1840s between Whigs and Liberals.

The Town Council's functions were not particularly extensive. The settlement of the city debt (incurred largely by the civic improvements lavishly financed by the badly administered pre-Reform municipal treasury) was a major undertaking which absorbed much time and attention in the 1830s. The Council's patronage of university chairs and city churches was its most important function; the appointment of professors was often a

matter in which political credentials counted for more than academic excellence.[6] Until the mid-1860s when civic improvements again dominated the affairs of the Town Council, there is little evidence of controversy over the awarding of contracts or reputed corruption and jobbery among the councillors.[7] The patronage of the city churches and the administration of the seat rents and annuity tax, however, were matters of greater controversy; sectarian groups struggled to obtain majorities in the Town Council in order to control patronage or to impress Parliament and national politicians with the depth of municipal feeling on certain ecclesiastical matters such as the annuity tax. The Council actually had little direct power; on its own it could not abolish the annuity tax, resolve the instrusion issue or even reform itself. In all these vital concerns, Parliament had the ultimate power. Nevertheless the achievement of mere party victories in the Town Council was gratifying to religious parties since they could be interpreted as moral victories. 'Respectable citizens', repelled by the animosities and triviality of the usual Town Council deliberations seldom made long term efforts to wrest control from the zealots, and most elections featured few contests and large-scale abstention.[8] This attitude made it easy for determined minorities to win at least a few seats and once on the Council to use it as an echo chamber for their minority views. The result was a kind of vicious circle which left Town Council affairs the plaything of dissidents, unchallenged by

the majority of moderate but apathetic electors.

Parliamentary elections were the great set-pieces of Edinburgh politics and much more insight may be gained by studying them in detail than the monotonous trivia of Town Council politics. Before considering the major political groups that participated in the Parliamentary elections it is necessary to emphasize just how primitive party structure remained in the period 1832-1852. As with almost all constituency parties in Britain, in Edinburgh the two great functions of party structure at this time were the registration of friendly voters each July and periodic explosions of hectic activity (principally canvassing and publicity) during Parliamentary elections. In between these elections there were long dormant periods when the absence of newspaper reports of party activities as well as the disappearance of references to such organizations in the extant private letters suggests a virtual dissolution of formal party structure. Edinburgh's party structures and functions remained on this simple level until after 1868 when national party organizations and new techniques of party management were developed. Therefore, in describing the political parties of Edinburgh between 1832 and 1852, we will be concentrating upon the party leaders and their ideology and only secondarily upon the kind of party structure devised by each party.

Edinburgh had been a Tory stronghold for generations, its politics controlled by the Dundas interest whose nominees were,

in the years before 1832, returned to municipal and Parliamentary office without serious or sustained opposition. Nothing in Edinburgh politics in the period from 1830 to 1868 was so abrupt as the termination of this long-standing state of affairs; it simply vanished in 1832 when the electorate of 5,000 was created overnight.[9] Henceforward the Dundas family's political influence shrank to control of Conservative party affairs in the county. Mention of Edinburgh politics disappears from the correspondence of the Dundas family and I have found no evidence at all of the Dundas family taking part in the constituency affairs of the Edinburgh Conservative party after 1832.

The election of 1832 in which the Tory candidate was beaten by the disastrous margin of over 2,000 votes[10] effectively demonstrated the extent of the reverse of Conservative fortunes, and subsequent elections in 1834 and 1835 confirmed the 1832 result. It was clear that Edinburgh was a liberal city and any hopes for Tory electoral success depended on the development of some split in the broadly liberal majority. Thus, the only elections after 1835 in which the Tories put a candidate forward were those of 1847 and 1852 when the Liberals and Whigs each had candidates. In these and other elections the Conservatives played a decisive part, their approximately 1,500 votes often being very influential in determining the success or defeat of other non-Tory candidates.[11] Nevertheless, the role of spoiler was not a very attractive one and certainly could not disguise the fact that the Tories were a

minority party with little prospect of electoral victory in Parliamentary elections. In municipal elections they were normally able to win Town Council seats in the New Town districts. But during the period 1833-1868 the Whig-Liberal majority in the Town Council was secure.

Who were the Conservative leaders in Edinburgh? The answer must be a vague one since no party records or extensive private Tory correspondence exist. From scanning the names of speakers at Conservative meetings, supporters of Tories at election hustings and the like, it appears that the majority of active Tory partizans were bankers, lawyers, professors and other professionals mixed with large numbers of landed gentlemen from the outskirts of Edinburgh or gentlemen living in the city without following any business. Two Tory professors, John Wilson and W.E. Aytoun, regular contributors to Blackwood's, the national Conservative periodical, served as chairmen in some election committees and occasionally appeared on the hustings with Tory candidates.[12] But the lawyers outshone the intellectuals as party organizers. The two Hope brothers, John, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates from 1830 to 1841 (when he became Lord Justice Clerk), and James, W.S. and Deputy Keeper of the Signet from 1828 until 1882, were the most pre-eminent legal Tories while Patrick Robertson who succeeded John Hope as Dean of Faculty was probably the lawyer most concerned with the actual committee work of the Tories.[13] He was aided by an old advocate,

Robert Forsyth, and a young solicitor, Thomas Landale, as well as John Scott, W.S., in the registration of voters and the organization of canvassing. Sir John Stuart Hepburn Forbes was the most prominent of the Edinburgh bankers who supported the Edinburgh Conservative party.[14] He and Sir Francis Walker Drummond, a cousin of the Marquis of Tweeddale, were even more concerned with Conservative activities in Edinburgh county and Haddington burghs elections,[15] but they often appeared on the hustings in Edinburgh elections and Drummond was chairman of the Tory committee in 1835.[16]

There are thus various men who we know were closely concerned with Tory decisions and tactics in Edinburgh, but beyond that there is very little known or apparently likely to be known about such things as how decisions were reached on whether to contest an election and, if so, whom to run.[17] Mentions of a Tory committee, whether in newspapers or correspondence are all fleeting and uninformative. Brief newspaper reports mention various ad hoc Conservative registration committees,[18] and there is evidence of Conservative committees in the conservative Fourth and Fifth districts of the New Town, sponsoring Tory candidates for the Town Council and attending to registering and canvassing.[19] An Edinburgh Operatives' Conservative Association existed between 1839 and the early 1840s and boasted a reading room, first in the High Street and by 1841 in Hunter Square.[20] Conservative clubs for the middle and

upper classes also made a brief appearance: the Junior Conservatives, a group of young Tory lawyers serving mainly as helpers in registration came and went in the mid-thirties,[21] while a more grandiose General Conservative Association of Scotland never really emerged alive from the protracted struggle over its planned structure and leadership during the 1830s. (The importance of that Association and its failure can best be seen in terms of the events of that period and so is considered in Chapter Three below).

With its internal leadership, organization, etc. shrouded in mystery, due to lack of surviving evidence, and with its role in post-1832 electoral affairs sharply reduced, due to the overwhelming popularity of the Whigs in the new electorate, the Edinburgh Conservatives do not frequently figure in this thesis. Nor did they figure frequently in a public way in Edinburgh political affairs. Almost the only Conservative events which were public were the publicity demonstrations at the election hustings and the Waterloo dinners, an annual get-together of Tories from the Edinburgh area which petered out in the 1840s. The bombastic toasts at least had the purpose of displaying the basic principles of the Edinburgh Conservatives (faithful followers of the party leadership in defending the Established Church, the monarchy, the House of Lords and opposing franchise extension, the ballot and free trade until 1846) even if nothing important ever transpired at the dinners. John Hope, the Dean of Faculty, writing to Peel in 1836, described the

Tory Waterloo banquet and its Whig counterpart, the annual binge in commemoration of the passage of the Reform Act, in these disparaging terms:

> meetings and dinners in Edinburgh on either side for many years past have been and always will be, entire failures in point of effect and impression in the country -- the same names, the same spectators, the same combinations of men are exhibited on all occasions and the result is that they are now generally laughed at thro' the country. [22]

It is a pity that in the case of the Conservatives, these 'laughable exhibitions' are the only party activities about which we have any detailed information. For the Whigs there is a greater variety of information, partly because their affairs were better reported by newspapers and partly because much more correspondence dealing with Whig party affairs has been preserved.

The initial leaders of the Whig party in Edinburgh were the famous group of lawyers -- Jeffrey, Cockburn, Murray, Gibson-Craig, etc. -- who had advocated liberal reforms in the pages of the Edinburgh Review since 1802.[23] In the pre-1832 era, these Whig lawyers led the movement for Parliamentary reform and attracted much popularity for their spirited leadership. When Jeffrey became Lord Advocate and Cockburn Solicitor General in the new Whig government of 1830, they were given an opportunity to implement their principles, and the result was the Scottish Reform Act of 1832 and the Municipal Reform Act of 1833.[24] The electorate created by these reforms acknowledged their

gratitude by returning Whigs to Parliament for Edinburgh for many years and by keeping Whigs in the majority in the new Town Council.

Insofar as there was a common political philosophy of Whiggery[25] the Edinburgh Whigs shared a desire for moderate reform which would alter state institutions to reflect social and economic changes which might otherwise threaten the stability of the state. Furthermore, as Dr. N. Phillipson has argued, the Scottish Whigs' desire for reform had always been informed by the ideal of bringing Scotland 'within the action of the constitution', which meant reforming Scottish institutions to provide the Scots with the rights and liberties guaranteed to Englishmen.[26] Thus, the Whigs strove to introduce such reforms as juries in civil trials, a franchise qualification commensurate with England's and the dismantling of the close system of Town Council and Parliamentary elections. Having thus brought Scotland within the action of the British constitution as they saw it, the Whigs were wary of recklessly instituting more and more radical reforms, many of which, they believed would have the effect of sacrificing peculiarly Scottish traditions and institutions to a dreary centralizing process, leaving Scotland a ghost-ridden northern province.[27]

Without gainsaying the Whigs' sincerity on this interesting cultural attitude, one may also note that this cultural cautiousness was attended with a basic conservatism, typical of English Whiggery too, which discouraged the Whigs from seeking more wide-scale

reforms than the 'English constitution' provided. As early as 1809, Francis Jeffrey had anticipated the need for the Whigs to pull the rein when the spur had achieved the allowable object:

> let the true friends of liberty and the constitution join with the people, assist them to ask, with dignity and with order, all that ought to be granted, and endeavour to withhold them from asking more. 28

The writing of Cockburn has an undertone of foreboding of what might happen if the popular fervour evinced during the reform agitations were allowed to boil over and the careful reconstruction of the electorate prove insufficiently pacifying to the masses. Thus, to proceed warily, frequently governing rather than leading, correcting and amending rather than creating and initiating, became a kind of Whig attribute in the years after 1832. The conservatism of the Whigs, who as much as the Tories wanted to maintain the Church, the Crown, the House of Lords, etc. was only fully exposed when the tide of reform rhetoric had receded, leaving the Whigs high and dry on the sands of government where every action was observed and open to hostile criticism.

The Whigs before 1830 had never given radicals reason to assume that the Whigs would ally with them for more than a few common goals and even then the lengths to which reform was to be taken in terms of these goals was never completely agreed upon by these groups. Nevertheless, the magnificient sponsorship of Parliamentary reform by the Whigs in the great constitu-

tional crisis of 1830-1832 aroused distorted expectations among many radicals within the working and middle classes, and they often became disappointed after 1832 when the Whigs showed by their actions or inaction how limited their actual goals were and how unwilling they were to extend liberty to regions and areas which many of their constituents felt needed drastic reform of various kinds. To these critics, the Whigs' enthusiasm for reform dwindled just as they began to enjoy the fruits of electoral victories, confirming a radical suspicion that they Whig lawyers had only championed reform until such time as they could supplant the Conservative lawyers in the places of patronage. This is not quite a fair judgement since we know how limited the Whigs' intentions really were. Nevertheless, it was a judgement which many middle class voters were more apt to make as the glow of reform in 1832 faded. And it must be added that the Whigs did not seriously attempt to deflate excessively optimistic expectations of future Whig reforms if such expectations might be translated into votes for Whig candidates.

The diversity of political and religious opinion within the Edinburgh constituency made it difficult for the Whigs to follow policies which did not give offense to someone. The Whig oligarchy found it not only temperamentally appropriate but alsp politically expedient, therefore, to follow a fairly moderate, middle of the road course in the years after 1832. But the dividends accruing from such moderation tended to dwindle by the late 1830s. Over a very disputed issue, clinging to the middle of the road

might offend all interested parties without giving any one group such satisfaction that it would vigorously support the Whigs. This can be seen in terms of one of the most perennial sources of discontent in Edinburgh -- sectarian conflicts. Whigs traditionally took a broad, tolerant view of religious matters,[29] a point of view peculiarly unsuited, in many ways, for early Victorian Scotland where to sectarians of all persuasions toleration was often equated with moral cowardice and lack of conviction. When moderate solutions failed the Whigs tended to let the sectarian problems drift; in this they were obeying an inner impulse which rejected sectarian squabbles as mean and trivial, and in so doing they ran the risk of alienating all the sectarians. On the patronage issue, the Whigs hoped the Church might resolve its own difficulties without government interference. The Veto Act of 1834, therefore, seemed the ideal solution; ironically, in failing to ratify it by act of Parliament, the Whigs set the scene for the eventual fatal collision between the Church and the law courts. By refusing to commit themselves either to the church extensionists or the Dissenters in the earlier voluntary agitation, the Whigs remained true to their principles of tolerant moderation, but antagonized both sides in the conflict. Similarly the Whigs' attempts to remove the annuity tax grievance always involved only a partial abolition of the tax which managed to arouse all the hostility of the Established Churchmen without fulfilling the expectations of the Dissenters.

This moderate attitude of the Whigs occasionally went beyond mere tolerance to a kind of contrary insistence that the sectarian issues were essentially minor technical difficulties with no larger implications. Thus, the Whig Shaw Lefevre, in his Report on the Edinburgh Annuity Tax, remarked that "in the outset, it is right to observe, that no questions affecting the principle of a Church establishment are at present raised . . . . it seems irrelevant to discuss them here".[30] This is effectively compared with an earlier remark by Chalmers on the same subject that "we admit the general question of a church establishment to be essentially implicated with this our most especial city question".[31] It was only too characteristic of the Whigs to try to avoid the implications of the annuity tax, to treat it as an isolated administrative problem which a compromise of administrative details would solve. In a large part the failure to come to terms with the true nature of the problem prevented the Whigs from ever solving it; neither the Church nor the Dissenters would accept their piecemeal solutions wholeheartedly.

A similarly cautious and non-commital kind of policy was typical of the Whig positions on such issues as the ballot and free trade and an extended franchise; Whig candidates habitually promised eventual reform but once elected were far more effective in describing the reasons why these reforms had to be postponed than in satisfying the dissidents. Of course, there were hundreds of voters who were as contented with Whiggish caution after 1832

as they were with Whiggish zeal in 1830-1832, but as the years passed after 1832 more and more voters, over various issues and for various reasons, became dissatisfied with the Whigs.

It would be unreasonable, however, to expect any 19th century political party, aiming for broad based national support, to provide definitive solutions to all the conflicts and problems that rapidly changing early Victorian society was producing.[32] The fairest judgement on the Whigs, which should be borne out by the evidence of the chapters to follow, was that they were a basically conservative body of men whose reforming energies were fairly exhausted after 1833. From that time on they were wary of doing anything more to stir up popular agitation unduly, to undermine what was left of a uniquely Scottish set of institutions and customs, or to alienate the middle class electorate whose sectarian animosities were to many Whigs distasteful and absurd. Long deprived of political power, the Whig leaders after 1832 were happy to enjoy the offices of government, administering with moderate liberality, but with little commitment to any of the highly motivated and self-conscious dissident political or sectarian groups which stridently clamoured for special attention. Moreover, it should be remembered that within the Whig oligarchy itself there was a potentially dangerous lack of unanimity over certain explosive issues. Probably the most dangerously divisive issue in the Whig leadership was policy towards non-intrusionism; the challenge that issue offered to Whig unity will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four

below. Another division in the Whig party of increasing importance after 1835 was the split between what seems reasonable to call conservative and liberal Whigs.

If conservative Whigs were those who stuck hard by the Reform Act of 1832 and were unwilling to advance swiftly against the corn laws and annuity tax lest they deal too harshly with vested interests and established institutions, the liberal Whigs were more impatient for reform in church and state and were more concerned with maintaining popularity among the middle class electorate than among the aristocracy and Established Church. What distinguished the latter from what I have called middle class radicals (see below) was their decision to work for these reforms under the leadership of the older conservative Whigs and within the Whig party as it was constituted in Edinburgh. Under the leadership of Adam Black the liberal Whigs were in an influential position in the Edinburgh Whig party from the mid-1840s. The distinction between these two kinds of Whigs can best be made clear by sketching profiles of the leading active Whigs of the period.

Sir James Gibson-Craig (1765-1850) is perhaps the best example of a conservative Whig in Edinburgh's terms. Son of an Edinburgh merchant, Gibson-Craig obtained great wealth by a large law practice and inheritance of the Riccarton estates south-west of Edinburgh.[33] Since the 1780s Gibson-Craig had been a thick-and-thin champion of the Whig cause in Edinburgh. After the Whig triumph of 1830-1832, Gibson-Craig, as a W.S., was

ineligible for the obvious reward of a judge's gown. Instead he was given a baronetcy in 1831 and continued to take an active part in Edinburgh city and county politics. His age apparently prevented him becoming an M.P. if indeed his ambitions ran in that direction.[34] He contented himself with overseeing the selection of candidates, the registration and canvassing of electors, and the day-to-day fortunes of the Whig party in the Edinburgh area. By 1834 J.A. Murray estimated that Sir James had spent "at least £10,000 on politics, perhaps more".[35] He habitually worked behind the scenes, coordinating the patronage and the electoral business of the party, and leaving the public gestures to other Whigs, partly because, as Cockburn said, Gibson-Craig was not a good speaker,[36] and partly too because he does not appear to have sought a larger role for himself. He was one of the few Whig leaders to take an ardent interest in very local bodies; he sat as a police commissioner for one of the 32 police wards, frequently participated in W.S. meetings, and served as an elder in the Edinburgh Established Church Presbytery. But Gibson-Craig did not use his local influence to attract popular support or lead crusades in connection with local issues. Instead his indefatigable exertions on behalf of his party resulted in Gibson-Craig becoming the popular symbol of the Whig clique, the self-seeking, jobbing lawyer, who trimmed his principles to suit the prevailing political winds. Of the many songs and squibs written in derision of Gibson-Craig, this is a sample:

Sir James, the leader of the pack
And whipper-in must be;
The member-maker general
of Scotland, eke is he. 37

He came to stand for the clique alone (often referred to as 'Gibson & Co.'), and perhaps in the end his part in forming the popular image of a self-seeking, unprincipled legal clique damaged the Edinburgh Whigs far more than all his money and management of mundane party matters had helped them. His devotion to the cause of Parliamentary reform in the pre-1830 era demonstrated a true desire for change, but his cautious moderation after 1832 (on such issues as free trade and non-intrusionism) indicated the somewhat narrow view of the scope of subsequent reform which characterized the conservative Whig outlook. Gibson-Craig's evident delight in dealing with the intricacies of patronage and government appointments, to the apparent exclusion of further reform, could only convince many middle class Edinburgh voters that his main motivation was love of political power, the pursuit of principle having been sacrified to the pursuit of power for its own sake.

For those who felt suspicious of the Whigs, this impression that 1832 had only resulted in the substitution of one conservative clique with another basically conservative clique of jobbing lawyers insincerely espousing liberality was reinforced by the swift retreat of Whig luminaries of the pre-1832 era to the prosperous peace of the judicial bench. Jeffrey and Cockburn took their seats in the

Court of Session in 1834.[38] J.A. Murray (1788-1859) replaced Jeffrey as Lord Advocate for five not very distinguished years.[39] He and Gibson-Craig appear to have been the main strategists in the Edinburgh Whig party in the crucial late 1830s when, to the increasing number of dissidents, they appeared, like the Whig government, more interested in maintaining their own places than in dealing with outstanding problems such as the annuity tax and free trade. Murray and Gibson-Craig seem good examples of those Whigs who felt that by 1832 Scotland had been brought within the action of the constitution and who now proposed to pursue cautious, moderate policies lest change upset the new order. It was, of course, not surprising that some citizens, who aimed at changing the British constitution or who felt that the Whigs had only just begun the process of liberalization, regarded the conservative Whigs' moderation as the rest-and-be-thankful policy of self-seeking politicians who resisted further change because it was a threat to their political power.

With Murray's elevation to the Court of Session what constituted a kind of liberal second generation of Edinburgh Whigs emerged into full political power. The new Lord Advocate, Andrew Rutherfurd (1791-1854), sympathetic to non-intrusionism and especially hard-working as Lord Advocate in Russell's ministry from 1846 to his premature retirement in 1851, signalled a new Whig responsiveness to the grievances of many Edinburgh citizens.[40] His successor, Lord Advocate James Moncreiff, was a more

successful Parliamentarian, a Free Churchman and a popular Whig leader in the 1850s and 1860s, liberalizing his views on franchise reform, for instance, as the household suffrage movement gathered strength in the late 1850s.[41] But, Rutherfurd as M.P. for Leith and almost exclusively concerned with national Whig affairs, and Moncreiff, who became Lord Advocate in 1851, played little part in the kind of Edinburgh constitutency politics which are the concern of this thesis. Other less distinguished Whigs, Adam Black and Sir James Gibson-Craig's son, William, became the major leaders of the Edinburgh constituency party after 1839 and they too were liberal Whigs.

Adam Black was technically one of the first generation Whigs: born in 1784, he was 48 when the Reform Bill passed and had been agitating for reform in the Merchant Company and elsewhere for many years.[42] He was a successful publisher and bookseller, a Congregationalist, married to the sister of a well-known radical, William Tait, another bookseller. As the first Treasurer in the reformed Town Council and as a persistent critic of the Established Church and its annuity tax, Black was among the most active liberal Whigs in the 1830s. His pamphlet, The Church Its Own Enemy, a forceful defence of the Town Council's policy of reducing seat-rents in the city churches which incidentally attacked the theory of an Established Church, went through several editions and Black was a member of the council of the Voluntary Church Association and the Scottish Central Board of Dissenters. Later

he looked on his efforts on behalf of the voluntaries as regrettable since they led to little but 'bitterness and strife'; and in the end, an elderly Black wrote "Dissenters are no more to be trusted as friends to true liberty than Churchmen".[43] Even at the height of the voluntary controversy Black had shown signs of reluctance to join in the more outspoken declarations of Dissenter independence.[44] When Black stood as the Whig candidate for the Lord Provostship in 1840 he was bitterly opposed by Non-Intrusionists and defeated; the election was instrumental in encouraging the growth of independent Dissenter and Non-Intrusionist parties, but through it all Black remained steadfastly loyal to the Whigs (see Chapter Four below). This adherence to the Whigs inspired Dissenters to regard Black as "a pliant sycophant of the Whig party"[45] and an 'enslaved voluntary' used by the Whigs.[46]

Black had always been a trusted ally of the Whig lawyers. From the first decade of the 19th century, Black's shop was frequented by prominent Whigs such as Jeffrey, Cockburn and Gibson-Craig

> who by and by came to regard Adam Black as the most forcible and trusty representative of Whig principles among the commercial class of Edinburgh. Whenever any special movement was afoot, he was usually the man first consulted outside of the Parliament House. 47

Having taken an active role in the reform meetings and demonstrations of 1830-1832, Black, upon the passage of the Reform Act, became the chief organizer, as convener of the 'Liberal Committee',

of the election campaign for Jeffrey and Abercromby.[48] His links with the Whigs' party structure, called the Liberal Aggregate Committee, remained close from that time on, with Black eventually severing all his connections with the Dissenters and radicals and obtaining a large part of the control of Whig party affairs in Edinburgh. Finally in 1856 when Macaulay retired, Black at 72 was given his reward for long services when the Whigs nominated him as their successful Parliamentary candidate. In 1865, Black's old ally of the 1830s, but now a bitter enemy, Duncan McLaren, defeated Black, who thereupon returned to his publishing business, dying in 1874.

Although Black stood forth in the 1830s as a champion of free trade and voluntaryism, he was in 1834 already being characterized as "orthodox Adam, so graceful and bland".[49] He was indeed an orthodox Whig when the choice lay between the Whig party and a Liberal alternative; and one may I think be justified in assuming that personal ambition might have led this one-time voluntary to cling to the Whigs.[50] But within the Whig party until about 1860, Black was a liberal leader who advocated free trade, the ballot and a substantial reform of the annuity tax in stronger terms than most other Whigs. As he got older and became more closely involved in the running of the Whig party he grew more conservative,[51] more orthodox, but certainly during the years considered in this thesis, Black was the foremost liberal Whig in Edinburgh.

It is perhaps noteworthy that most liberal Whigs tended, like Black, to be merchants or manufacturers from middle class backgrounds. For instance, among the other well-known liberal Whigs was J.F. Macfarlan, chemist and druggist to Queen Victoria. He too was one of the keenest reformers in the pre-1832 agitations; he sat for the Second district in the first reformed Town Council of 1833, being elected one of the first four bailies. He was an indefatigable mover of liberal petitions against the income tax, and for free trade and financial reform, etc. in both the Merchant Company and the Chamber of Commerce. After serving as secretary of the latter body from 1835 until 1852, Macfarlan was elected chairman for two years; the Free Church M.P. Charles Cowan described him as "the life and soul of the Chamber of Commerce".[52] Although a Free Churchman, Macfarlan's Whig loyalties were never drawn away to the militantly independent Free Church party in Edinburgh. More progressive than many of the older Whigs, he chose to confine his liberalism within the Edinburgh Whig party even though in many political desires he had much in common with McLaren's Liberal party.

The politician who shared the role of chief Whig leader for Edinburgh in the 1840s and 1850s with Adam Black was William Gibson-Craig. Born in 1797, William trained as an advocate, but never developed a practice since he and his father enjoyed considerable wealth from the income of their estates in various parts of the Lothians.[53] He sat as M.P. for Midlothian from

1837 until 1841 when Sir F.W. Drummond had created so many Tory votes that a contest would have been hopeless.[54] Although he had always regarded the Edinburgh constituency as "the most troublesome place in Great Britain to have anything to do with",[55] he was persuaded by his father and other Whigs to take the seat made vacant by Sir John Campbell's retirement in 1841 (see Chapter Four below). He sat for Edinburgh for eleven years, becoming the Scottish Lord of the Treasury in 1846, retiring in 1852 because of ill-health. He thus had inherited the mantle which had finally fallen from his father's shoulders in 1850 when Sir James died.

Sir William was not a distinguished or out-spoken politician, but a moderate, accommodating M.P. who successfully avoided antagonizing the electors by treating them with a deference which the more remote Whigs of the 1830s had not cultivated. As a Non-Intrusionist and as a responsive, moderately energetic M.P. in his constituents' behalf, Gibson-Craig escaped most of the opposition mounted against his colleague Macaulay. He was a poor speaker and no innovator, responding to Edinburgh interest groups without completely satisfying their demands and only mildly supporting the liberal aims of gradual reduction of the corn laws and abolition of all church rates. Gibson-Craig's major contribution to the Edinburgh Whigs was his quiet, unassuming good services which must have helped to efface the memories of his father's generation's more high handed representation of Edinburgh.

Nevertheless, Sir William was still his father's son and was very unpopular in 1856 for overseeing the replacement of Macaulay with Black which was accomplished in the shortest possible time to forestall an effective Liberal opposition.

This incident revived charges of Whig clique from the Liberals and this brief discussion of the Whigs concludes with a review of the basis for this allegation. In 1832 the great majority of the Edinburgh electorate appeared to accept with satisfaction the political leadership of the Edinburgh lawyers who had championed Parliamentary reform for so many years and who were apparently committed to the political independence of the newly enfranchised voters. However, as time went on and the Edinburgh Whigs accepted as candidates outsiders like Campbell and Macaulay -- English-oriented cabinet luminaries who needed a seat -- as the original Edinburgh Whigs moved on to the bench and younger lawyers took their place as party leaders, many citizens began to criticize this domination by expectant lawyers and wondered if it was so natural that this 'clique' should retain exclusive control of the Whig party. Criticism increased as the aims of the malcontents often diverged from those of the official Whigs: the voluntaries, the radicals and to some extent the Non-Intrusionists were more likely to attack the structure of the party when the party leaders were indifferent to their desires. Before considering the result of this criticism, it is necessary to establish the nature of the Whig party structure.

The first Whig party committee in Edinburgh was formed under the leadership of Adam Black to promote Jeffrey and Abercromby in 1832 as well as to register the new voters.[56] Most details of organization are lacking as they are for all party structures of this period. Whig district committees were formed in the new Town Council districts in 1833 to deal with nomination of candidates and canvassing. In 1834, a Whig committee was formed for the 'southern districts', the suburbs south of the municipal boundary. The system of committees was rationalized in the summer of 1835 when the Edinburgh Liberal Aggregate Committee was formed to oversee registration and supervise the selection of Parliamentary candidates.[57] For many years thereafter the registration sub-committee re-appeared each July, like its Conservative counterpart described above, to assist friendly voters in registering.[58] The registration agents, John Jopp and J.C. Brodie, both W.S., seem to have served as Whig party agents throughout the period. Unfortunately there are no records, official or personal, of the activities of these gentlemen or of the Aggregate Committee and its various district and sub-committees.[59] Rare and vague allusions in newspapers and private correspondence suggest the committees flourished on an ad hoc basis at elections only to sink back into dormancy after elections.[60] The fluctuating size of the Liberal Aggregate Committee surfacing at various elections also suggests the absence of any permanent structure.[61]

The scanty evidence from Whig correspondence shows that

the party chiefs -- the Gibson-Craigs, Murray, and Black -- controlled not only the composition of the sub-committees of the Aggregate Committee,[62] but, more importantly, the choice of candidates in Parliamentary elections. At almost every election the Whig leaders deliberated privately on possible candidates, corresponded with them, and when a satisfactory arrangement was made, the Liberal Aggregate Committee was assembled to endorse officially the decision of the party leaders. This rubber-stamping function was exercised in 1834 (after Murray, Gibson-Craig and Jeffrey had agreed to Sir John Campbell's candidacy), in 1839 (when Black had already arranged Macaulay's candidacy), in 1841 (when the elder Gibson-Craig persuaded his son to stand), and in 1856 (when Sir William Gibson-Craig and Black had settled on Black's candidacy in advance).[63] Upon occasions, such as the election of 1852 (see Chapter Six below), the Aggregate Committee did contribute to party decisions, but in the main it was only called in to ratify the decision of the party leaders and to act on them -- that is, to canvass voters and prepare the posters and meetings in the districts on behalf of their leaders' choice. There are only rare indications that the Committee resented this menial relationship. The only important opposition to the party leaders emanated from men and groups, such as the Dissenters and McLaren, the Non-Intrusionists and their leader, Sir James Forrest, who eventually abandoned the Whig party to form independent parties. The loyal Whigs who stayed within the Committee

had little cause to complain about the status quo and throughout the period under consideration continued to act as party functionaries without apparently seeking a larger share in party decisions than the leaders were willing to give them.

In the city at large, however, discontent with the Whig party structure deepened after 1834. In such a liberal city as Edinburgh, in which the Tories were so weak, the Whig nominee was almost automatically the successful candidate and therefore those who decided who the Whig candidate was to be were the real electors. That decision was taken year after year by a small group of party leaders in private and then accepted by an acquiescent committee, whose membership could not possibly reflect the diversity of opinion in the city. The Whigs were aware of the growing hostility of the citizens to this state of affairs. Writing in regard to the starting of Macaulay in 1839, A. Currie, a Whig lawyer, wrote "but we must work warily, as the thing must emanate or seem to emanate with the constituency. They are exceedingly jealous of cliques, dictation, etc. and anything tending that way must be eschewed".[64] And a few days later, William Gibson-Craig wrote his father that the conveners of district committees were "looked upon as trading politicians and I have no doubt that dislike to them was partly the cause of McLaren's indiscreet proceedings lately. This feeling is much more general among the most respectable and influential of the citizens than you are aware of and also among the lawyers and W.S.".[65] The resent-

ment inspired invidious comparisons between the 'Tory tyranny' of the years before 1832 and the 'Whig tyranny' which followed.[66]

These protests can be linked to the resentment of interest groups such as the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists against a secular party which avoided religious controversies as much as possible, also to the resentment of the recently enfranchised middle class voters against the continued domination by the legal profession of the political machinery of the constituency, and to the resentment of secular radicals against the conservative Whig leaders. All of these resentments informed the protests of various newspapers and politicians from 1832 and partly explain why the Whig party structure, which, considered on its own merits, was hardly more than a relatively efficient political structure, was the target of so much abuse. But also worth emphasizing was the resentment against any party structure during the early Victorian era. The Edinburgh constituency was particularly sensitive to the encroachments of party over the liberty of the citizens after the decades of Tory control; to find that the victory of 1832 was merely that of one legal party over another was a disappointment only partially offset by the undoubted popularity of the new party's aims and principles among the majority of the electorate. However, as these aims and principles grew less popular with militant, self-conscious minorities, the domination of the majority party was more than ever attacked: the conservative Hugh Miller thus found a common frame of reference with such unlikely allies as Chartists

and voluntaries.

The reaction against the Whig party was led by middle class radicals whose hostility was founded upon a variety of social, religious and secular grievances. The middle class radicals tended to be the merchants and manufacturers who resented the social domination of the lawyers, the Dissenters who paid the annuity tax so that the lawyers could attend the Established Church, and the free traders who grew impatient with Whiggish caution and dilatoriness over the corn laws. These malcontents and those secular radicals who had always opposed the Whigs since the 1832 Reform Act, began to come together and call themselves the advanced Liberal party; and since from the 1840s it had a separate party structure and separate leaders from the Whig party I have called it the Liberal party in this thesis. Whig politicians had a habit of referring to their party as the Liberal party after 1832, but they can and indeed should be thought of as Whigs whose attitudes towards reform and religion and whose social and political loyalties were quite different from the Liberals. From the 1840s in Edinburgh there was both a Liberal and a Whig party, both with separate constituency organizations.

A typical example of the kind of secular middle class radical that was part of the Liberal party base was James Aytoun (1803-1881), an advocate from a Fife family (his cousin was the Tory professor, W.E. Aytoun). He took a leading part in the Edinburgh reform demonstrations of 1830-1832 and stood for Parliament in

1832 and 1834, withdrawing before the poll in 1832 and suffering a massive defeat in 1834 (see Chapter Three below for details). His radicalism centred on disestablishment (even though Aytoun was an Established Churchman), triennial Parliaments, the ballot, free trade and reform in the services, and he was particularly critical of the legal Whigs' utter domination of the constituency in the post-reform period. But Aytoun lacked electoral strength as his miserable showing in 1834 proved and he alienated what working class support he still enjoyed by 1839 when he refused to support a Chartist candidate in the election of that year. Middle class radicals were essentially ineffective in Edinburgh in the 1830s, with an electorate either too conservative or as yet too grateful to the Whigs to be attracted to Aytoun's strident opposition, and with an increasingly hostile working class. However, in 1839-1840, just as Aytoun and the middle class radicals were losing contact with the working class, a large group of dissatisfied Dissenters were disengaging themselves from the Whig party. When these two groups united, the foundation for the Liberal party was laid.

In this alliance of radicals and Dissenters the religious element predominated and secular radical aims were subordinated to religious issues like Maynooth and the annuity tax. Certain aspects of the middle class radical programme of the 1830s were very enthusiastically adopted by the Dissenter party; among these were free trade and the desire for M.P.s with closer social and religious links with the city than the Whig candidates were supposed

to have.[67] But generally when the middle class radicals were absorbed by the Dissenter party, and particularly when the leadership of the amalgamated group was exclusively Dissenter, dominated of course by the Dissenter champion McLaren, radicalism was bound to be expressed first and foremost in religious terms.

The origins and form of this emerging Liberal party structure are extremely obscure. The Dissenters had an electors' committee from 1834 (in which McLaren, Black and James Peddie were most prominent) which advised Dissenter electors how best to serve Dissenter interests with their votes.[68] It blossomed into a full-scale registration and candidate-choosing organization in 1841 but there is no extant evidence that I have found which explains the process of growth or the details of its structure. A similar kind of mystery surrounds the formation and internal workings of the Non-Intrusionist party, as it developed out of the election committee for the municipal election of 1840. This committee revived with each municipal election but it was not until the Parliamentary election of 1846 that its effect was fully felt. In that by-election and the general election of 1847 the Dissenters and Free Churchmen combined forces and apparently constructed a joint election committee which performed all the canvassing and publicity functions which the Liberal Aggregate Committee had always done. There is practically no evidence of the method of selection of candidates, or of the degree of control given to district committees, or about the sharing of responsibilities and decisions by the two

religious groups or of the numbers and influence of radicals such as Aytoun who were unconnected with the Dissenter and Free Church groups. Without any evidence to the contrary, one is probably justified in concluding that in spite of the Dissenters' criticism of the Whigs for their dictatorial leadership, closed party structure, etc. the same criticisms could be levelled at this party; the Free Church party was perhaps even more insular in its outlook, retaining in its political arm the fierce separaism of its ecclesiastical foundation . Thus the Liberal party was from the beginning based on several distinct groups which overlapped -- the Dissenters, Free Churchmen, the commercial middle class, and middle class radicals -- and in its methods and leadership it was just as exclusionist as the legally-oriented Whigs.

It is extremely difficult to find vital evidence on the life and activities of many prominent Liberals, both Free Church and Dissenter.[69] For instance the two baronets whose role in shaping and leading the Free Church party in independence and as a wing of the Liberal party, disappeared in history with scarcely a trace. They were Sir James Forrest, an advocate of independent wealth and Lord Provost from 1837 to 1843, and Sir William Johnston, engraver and mapmaker, and Lord Provost from 1848 to 1851. The only source for information on them is very inadequate newspaper references.[70] Not much more is known about McLaren's lieutenants in the Dissenter wing of the Liberal party. But what we do know demonstrates the close link between secular

radicalism and Dissent.

Thomas Russell, an ironmonger, who was one of the most persistent of the annuity tax critics and who suffered imprisonment rather than pay t he tax in 1836,[71] was also a keen member of the Anti-Corn Law Association in Edinburgh. He was a member of the executive committee of the Liberation Society, and was also a veteran campaigner for Parliamentary reform, chairing many meetings of radical reformers in the 1840s and 1850s. Like Russell, J.H. Stott, a leather merchant, sat on the Town Council for a number of years as an anti-annuity tax Liberal who had won renown for his incarceration in Calton Gaol; Stott was a Congregationalist and a moral force Chartist who was involved in every middle class reform movement of the period. Both of these intense Dissenters occasionally disapproved of McLaren's tendency to accept compromise proposals for the reduction rather than the abolition of the annuity tax (see Chapter Six below), but generally rallied to McLaren's party at elections.

A more dependable supporter was James Blackadder, upholsterer, Dean of Guild from 1852 to 1853 and Master of the Merchant Company in 1849 and 1863-1864, described by David Dickson, the Free Church Liberal, as of "not much ability but a stern and thorough Christian man of great public spirit . . . . From his . . . sour visage and his outspoken advocacy of the Sabbath there was much prejudice against him".[72] He was regarded as McLaren's first lieutenant during the elections of 1851-1852[73] and followed his master into all the crusades which McLaren undertook. As faithful was the solicitor Andrew Fyfe,

U.P. elder of Rose Street Church, and magistrate, who served as a Liberal party functionary. He was an executive committeeman of the Liberation Society yet took a pragmatic politic view in dealing with the annuity tax. Like McLaren he appears to have been a realist and a party man more intent on winning practical victories than keeping his principles entirely intact. Another party stalwart was Hugh Rose, a very successful paint and oil manufacturer, and a Baptist who served as a joint-chairman of McLaren's election committee in 1865 and 1874 after having been chairman of the Chamber of Commerce (1860) and Master of the Merchant Company (1862).[74] Other mercantile Liberals included the three Richardson brothers, tobacconists and drysalters: James was Master of the Merchant Company (1857) and chairman of the Chamber of Commerce (1861-1863), while both Francis and Ralph served for long periods in the Town Council and, during the 1850s, on the general council of the Liberation Society. They were all free trade activists, closely involved in Liberal party affairs; McLaren told Cobden that "in their judgement and discretion I have great confidence".[75]

Another middle class radical was Professor William Dick of the Veterinary College who, while expanding the Edinburgh college, was the convener of trades from 1835 to 1838 and a radical member of the Town Council in the late 1830s and early 1840s.[76] Though a member of the Established Church, he exceeded most Dissenters in his zeal to abolish the annuity tax, often taking ex-

treme positions in the Town Council and participating in the public agitations against it. Dick, together with Bailie Stott, organized a People's League in the late 1840s, designed to unite Chartists and middle class radicals, and he went so far as to stand for Parliament in 1852 against McLaren amongst others, although he withdrew before the poll and never had the remotest chance of success. He stood as an uncompromising radical contemptuous of the sacrifice of principle to sectarian pride in that election. Nevertheless, he co-operated with McLaren many times throughout the period here considered, especially in the various anti-annuity tax and parliamentary reform pressure groups which came and went over the years. One misses documentary evidence particularly in connection with Dick whose somewhat independent position might have given an interesting objectivity to his impressions of Edinburgh politics.

There is, however, more documentary evidence available for the great political champion of the Dissenters, Duncan McLaren.[77] He came from humble Highland parents, was apprenticed to a merchant at Dunbar and arrived in Edinburgh at eighteen to work in a High Street haberdashery shop; his industry attracted financial support which enabled him to begin business on his own in 1824 at the age of twenty-four. From then on, his drapery and dry goods business prospered steadily and he became involved in both banking and railway business; his attainment of wealth and security was symbolized in his purchase in 1852 of Newington

House, in which capacious, suburban circumstances McLaren lived the rest of his long life. The seriousness, attention to detail, dogged determination, etc. which no doubt had much to do with his business success informed McLaren's approach to politics. No one ever accused McLaren of a sense of humour[78] and the newspaper reports of his speeches, his extant letters, and his pamphlets all reflect the impressive but stolid intelligence, the facility for statistical analysis rather than persuasive rhetoric, and the inability to lighten the ponderousness of his manner with eloquence or fancy.[79]

Where the lack of a substantial collection of McLaren's private correspondence particularly inhibits the historian is in explaining the basis of McLaren's radicalism. His official biographer creates the impression that the young Duncan of the 1820s and 1830s had all the confirmed opinions of the mature Duncan of the 1860s. It is impossible at this time to penetrate beyond the official version to discover such crucial things as what personal circumstances might have led to McLaren's alienation from the Whig lawyers, whether religious non-conformity stimulated secular radicalism or vice versa or both emerged simultaneously, etc. By the time private letters and newspapers begin to comment on McLaren, he was already in his late thirties with both the secular and sectarian aspects of his liberalism so intertwined as to be inseparable to the historian's eye. The best that can be said at this point is that he was apparently deeply committed to both his

Dissenting sect and his class and that a strong desire to promote the interests of both against the Established Church and the class that supported it made him an advocate of both political and religious reforms. A third motive or force operating within McLaren was undoubtedly a very strong ambition to succeed. Many references in the chapters to follow reflect the general impression of his friends and foes that McLaren desired power and enjoyed exercising it.

McLaren's ambition seems to have been tempered by a very fine sense of the feasible, a sensitivity to the possibilities of success which only deserted him briefly in 1852. He moved warily and circumspectly and appears to have never entered a contest or struggle unless certain in his own mind of some kind of successful outcome.[80] Although usually adamant and steadfast in his long-term goals, McLaren could be flexible in the short term, adjusting his programme to fit the possibilities of the moment. It was this flexibility and adaptability which led him to adopt different tactics in the fight against the annuity tax at different times or to adopt different attitudes towards the Free Church, depending on the political possibilities of each situation. This practical strategy sometimes resulted in the antipathy of uncompromising radicals who suspected McLaren of trying to gain personal advantage by the sacrifice of principles.

The Duncan McLaren of the newspapers, public meetings, hustings speeches and petitions to Parliament -- the only McLaren

we know until better documentary evidence is available -- was in many ways the archetypal radical liberal of the mid-Victorian era. He was a dedicated voluntary utterly opposed to any state interference in religious matters. A Utilitarian radical in many respects, McLaren was never completely committed to that rigorous cast of mind, especially when the problems of Victorian society posed awkward dilemmas for the man who tried to be both humane and utilitarian.[81] But although he might dispute the logic of laissez-faire on particular points, he remained committed to the general liberal principle that to loosen and eventually discard all social, economic, political and religious restrictions upon the ever-growing numbers of responsible members of the community was the first responsibility of the enlightened statesman. He demonstrated a more optimistic assessment of the numbers of responsible citizens than most other liberals when, for instance, he advocated a further broadening of the suffrage in the 1840s and 1850s. He recognized the necessity of reforming Parliament before many of the other reforms he wished for could be achieved,[82] but meanwhile he strove for middle class reforms, like the abolition of the corn laws and annuity tax, which were feasible within the Parliament of 1832-1868. He contributed to the struggle with newspaper articles,[83] the formation and leadership of interest groups like the Scottish Central Board of Dissenters, and the construction of an alternative political party. He did not, until 1868, call in the working class as an ally and never gave to social

problems the attention and energy he devoted to religious and political questions.[84]

In his non-conformist and commercial background, his resistance against the conservative upper class (in Edinburgh's terms -- the legal profession), his belief in free trade and radical Parliamentary reform, McLaren was ideologically related to the Manchester School. He established personal relationships with Cobden and Bright during the anti-corn law agitation and this was consummated by his third marriage, in 1848, to Priscilla Bright, John Bright's sister. He was close to Cobden and Bright, corresponding with them fairly regularly,[85] and obviously shared many motivations and ideas, although on such topics as the Crimean War, McLaren differed from them.[86] McLaren also corresponded with and knew other English radicals such as Edward Miall (especially in connection with the Liberation Society[87]), and Joseph Hume.[88]. By the late 1840s McLaren was moving in British radical circles apparently accepted by the English radicals as the chief Scottish radical and the architect of a new Liberal party, founded upon non-conformity and middle class radicalism. In some respects, therefore, McLaren, like Bright in England, carried out the extremely arduous task of breaking the Scottish political soil and laying the foundations of the Liberal party of the later 19th century, the instrument of W.E. Gladstone's genius. This at least is the hypothesis on which one must proceed until more is known about McLaren's entire range of activities in Scotland.

But there is certainly no doubt about McLaren's essential leadership of the new Liberal party in Edinburgh. It was McLaren who brought together the middle class merchants who resented the socio-political domination of the lawyers, the middle class Dissenters who wanted disestablishment, and the middle class radicals who were impatient to continue the reform begun in 1832. In his own personality and in the party he built, these three influences -- the social, the religious and the political -- appear to have been almost equally important. McLaren linked the opponents of the social, religious and political establishment of Edinburgh, and his party -- the Liberal party -- was therefore the anti-establishment party *par excellence*.

Perhaps the greatest handicap of both McLaren and his party was the Dissenters' old opposition to the Evangelical Non-Intrusionists in which McLaren had figured so prominently in the 1830s. The bad blood left behind by this controversy poisoned the relations between the Non-Intrusionists and the Free Church party and McLaren remained *persona non grata* with many of his old enemies. An ideological difference survived too in the Free Church reluctance to abandon the establishment principle after the disruption; this apparently remained a conscientious scruple as well as a way of expressing dislike of McLaren which kept the Liberal alliance between the Dissenters and Free Churchmen formed in 1847 from surviving into the 1850s. Thus, in a curious way, religious issues, voluntaryism and patronage, both aspects of the establishment

question, were the bases of the middle class political opposition to the Whigs while that very question -- establishment -- prevented the two wings of that opposition from joining permanently. Or to put it differently, religious feeling both inspired the growth of a Liberal party and prevented it from achieving its full potential.

It is also true that while religious feeling was the basis for the growth of an anti-Whig party that religious feeling alone was too narrow a base on which to build a successful Victorian political party. This thesis shows on a local level what was true on the national level too: that sectarian groups alone could not flourish continuously in the political realm. Effective in ad hoc coalition with other sectarian groups in a specific election or in temporary alliance with secular groups, strictly religious parties were too limited in outlook and appeal to dominate such a diverse constituency as Edinburgh. McLaren, though aware of this crucial weakness, was unable to solve the dilemma for more than a few years. His success in 1847 (see Chapter Five below) in bonding sectarian and secular dissidence in a viable political party was a premature example of the kind of Liberal coalition that underpinned Gladstone's success of twenty years later. Here again, McLaren, though initially successful only in limited fashion, was helping shape the great Liberal party of the late Victorian period.

Hence, the new political age that dawned in December 1832 was one of considerable growth, change and transition, although in 1832 it might have seemed the beginning of a period of consoli-

dation. The defeated Tories were relegated to a permanent minority status and the triumphant new establishment party of the Whigs, led by the famous Whig lawyers, bade fair to enjoy a long reign, secure in the favour of the middle class constituency. But initial enthusiasm faded as the Whigs failed to fulfill many expectations and new issues and grievances arose. With the constituency separating out into self-conscious sectarian and radical groups whose interests as frequently clashed as overlapped, Edinburgh politics acquired a fluidity and unpredictability which remained unresolved until the 1860s. The period after 1832, therefore, was one of complicated adjustments, shifting alliances and developing attitudes. Investigating the period in the detail which follows ought to clarify not only the origins of the late Victorian Liberal party but also the nature of Victorian politics in a large and interesting Scottish city. These first two chapters have set forth Edinburgh's social and religious groups and the conflicts which animated them as well as the political formations and leaders who emerged as the major elements in the political developments of the years from 1832 to 1852. The following chronological chapters provide detailed analyses of how the challenge to the Whigs grew in the 1830s, prospered in the 1840s and collapsed in the early 1850s. A final chapter indicates the significance of this conflict and estimates the extent to which Edinburgh's experience was unique or universal in the early Victorian period.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO

1. Dr. W. Ferguson has described the main clauses of the Act and the confusion over the definition of residence and lodgers as they applied to the Act in his article "The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832: intention and effect" in Scottish Historical Review, Vol. XLV (1966), especially pp. 112-113.

2. The 1833 Act is given in the Public General Statutes Affecting Scotland, 1707-1845, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1876), Vol. II, pp. 651-661.

3. See Sir T.B. Whitson, The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh, 1296 to 1932 (Edinburgh, 1932).

4. Reports from Commissioners, Corporations(Scotland), p. 314.

5. E.P. Hennock, "The Social Compositions of Borough Councils in Two Large Cities, 1835-1914" in H.J. Dyos (ed.), The Study of Urban History (London, 1968), p. 331.

6. University patronage never appears to have been an electoral issue; once in the Town Council, however, radicals, Whigs and Tories usually took characteristic positions on the appointment of candidates to chairs. Hence, I believe the examination of the Town Council's administration of university affairs is logically considered by the historian of the University (as in Sir A. Grant, The St ory of the University of Edinburgh, 2 vols. (London, 1884), especially Vol. II, chapters VI and VII). From my

6. (cont'd)

point of view, Town Council attitudes to the University were usually the effect rather than the cause of sectarian and political rivalries in the city at large.

7. For a discussion of the little agitation there was in regard to civic improvements during the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s, see J. Sinclair, Case for the Extension of the Municipal Boundary of Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1855). Before 1848 the responsibility for paving, lighting and sewage was spread over a confusing array of various bodies, with jurisdiction over different parts of the city and suburbs. A consolidating act in 1856 extended the municipal boundaries to the Parliamentary boundaries and all public services in the new city area were brought under the control of the Town Council.

8. A poll of more than 50% was extremely rare. Newspaper coverage of election meetings and results shrank from extensive in the 1830s to extremely brief in the mid-1840s to the most perfunctory recognition in the 1850s.

9. The last member of the Dundas dynasty to play the leading role in the Tory political control of Scotland, the second Lord Melville, had refused to take office under Canning in 1827 and this withdrawal was the first sign of the approaching dismantling of the old political system (see G.W.T. Omond (ed.), The Arniston Memoirs (Edinburgh, 1887), p. 329 ff.). He took

9. (cont'd)

office again under Wellington, but after the fall of that ministry in 1830, he retired permanently from politics.

10. The two Whigs, Jeffrey and Abercromby, received 4,035 and 3,850 to the Tory Blair's 1,519 (T. Wilkie, The Representation of Scotland (Paisley, 1895), p. 106.

11. The best example is 1852 when Cowan, the Free Church moderate, beat McLaren, because the Tories decided to support Cowan as the lesser of two evils (see Chapter Six below). The Conservative, T.C. Bruce, came a poor fourth.

12. John Wilson (1785-1854), professor of moral philosophy from 1820, 'Christopher North' of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine and part creator of the celebrated Noctes Ambrosianae, wrote many articles in support of the Tory party at the national level (DNB, Vol. XXI, pp. 578-583). His son-in-law, W.E. Aytoun (1813-1865), professor of belles lettres and rhetoric from 1845, was an equally caustic and prolific contributor to Blackwood's. He was also an advocate, serving as sheriff of Orkney from 1852 (T. Martin, Memoir of W.E. Aytoun (Edinburgh, 1867). Both men were primarily concerned with their teaching and journalism, little of which had local references; of the two, Aytoun was more active in local politics.

13. His ribaldry and coarseness were as well-known as his girth which his two nicknames, 'Facetious Peter' and 'Peter of

13. (cont'd)

the Paunch', suggest. He appears to have been behind the scenes in most Tory election efforts, but his ordinary behaviour was evidently not sufficiently serious or responsible to qualify him as a potential candidate. He was passed over in 1835 when his junior, Duncan McNeill, was appointed Solicitor General; Peel and Lord Advocate Rae rejected him for his 'buffoonery' (letter (16th January 1835) from Rae to Peel: BM, Peel MSS, Add. MS 40339, ff. 333-334).

14. The great banking family of Forbes -- William Forbes and Co., became the Union Bank in 1838 -- begun by Sir William Forbes (1739-1806) had proliferated by 1832 into several branches which were connected with prominent Tories in other professions. A member of another great Edinburgh banking firm, Forbes Hunter Blair, was the first Tory Parliamentary candidate in the Reform era (see Chapter Three below).

15. For Drummond's prodigious efforts in the Tory interest, expending in excess of £10,000 creating votes, etc., see J.I. Brash, "The Conservatives in the Haddington District of Burghs, 1832-1852" in Transactions of the East Lothian Antiquarian and Field Naturalists' Society, Vol. XI (1968).

16. See letter (23rd July 1836) from Sir J.S. Forbes to Lord Ramsay: SRO, Dalhousie MSS, GD 45/14/564.

17. Every effort has been made to trace the personal papers of

17. (cont'd)

the gentlemen mentioned in the preceding paragraph but, very unhappily, with no result. The Blackwood MSS in the NLS are unfortunately devoid of references to Edinburgh politics. The Conservative newspapers, the Edinburgh Advertiser and Edinburgh Courant, are often less informative of Tory party activities than their Whig counterparts.

18. See, for example, Edinburgh Advertiser, 4th July 1834, 17th July 1835, and 18th July 1845. These committees tried to stimulate apathetic Tories to register to vote and provided legal aid if their claims were contested in the registration court.

19. See Jamie, Hope, pp. 24-29. This John Hope was a W.S. (no relation to the Hope brothers) who served as convener of the Tories' Fifth district committee in the mid-1830s. Hope selected possible candidates, and the committee (no details of how many served on the committee or how they were chosen to do so) then decided on their eligibility. Hope's canvassing and registering efforts were very time-consuming. From 1851 he served in the Town Council for many years; he was a keen temperance advocate as well as one of Edinburgh's most zealous anti-Catholics.

20. See leaflet in Vol. IV, entry 202, of Edinburgh Miscellanea (a multi-volume scrapbook kept in the EPL) and also Jamie, Hope, p. 23. Hope was an honourary member. The President, Vice-President and Treasurer were all bootmakers from the

20 (cont'd)

working class district of Potterrow and Buccleuch Street. This isolated instance of working class Toryism is difficult to explain. I am unaware of any reason why bootmakers should have been sympathetic to the Tory party, nor have I run across any other references to special political activities of these men or their occupation. The Tory operatives association movement began in England in the mid-1830s and appears to have come rather late to Edinburgh (see R.L. Hill, Toryism and the People, 1832-1846 (London, 1929), p. 47 ff. The Edinburgh Operatives' Association sank out of sight after 1841; at least I have found no mention of it in any sources after that date.

21 Jamie, Hope, p. 24. Hope was an active Junior Conservative.

22. Letter (27th November 1836): BM Peel MSS, Add. MS 40422, ff. 249-251.

23. For the careers of these Edinburgh Whigs, see H. Cockburn, Life of Lord Jeffrey, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1852) and Memorials, passim. And for a detailed analysis of their campaign for legal reforms, see Phillipson, Scottish Whigs and the Reform of the Court of Session.

24. For their part in the drafting of these bills, see Cockburn, Jeffrey, Vol. I, p. 310 ff., and Ferguson, "The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832".

25. For an attempt to portray Whiggery as a coherent political philosophy, see D. Southgate, The Passing of the Whigs, 1832-1886 (London, 1962) and for illuminating insights into aspects of Whiggery, see N. Gash, Reaction and Reconstruction in English Politics, 1832-1852 (Oxford, 1965), passim.

26. See Phillipson, Scottish Whigs and the Reform of the Court of Session, especially pp. 74-75, 343. Phillipson quotes the following passage from Cockburn's Jeffrey, Vol. I, p. 82, as the only full statement of the Whigs' objectives. "The sole object was to bring Scotland within the action of the constitution. For this purpose it was plain that certain definite and glaring peculiarities must be removed, and the people trained to the orderly exercise of public rights; and for the promotion of these ends, all sound principles of liberty, to whatever region applicable, must be explained and upheld".

27. A good example of this reluctance was Cockburn's difficulty in accepting the reform of the Scottish Poor Law along the lines of the New English Poor Law. While recognizing the deficiencies of the old, inadequate system of poor relief, Cockburn was loath to see Anglicization overtake yet one more hitherto distinctive feature of Scottish society. See Memorials, Vol. I, pp. 257-259, Vol. II, p. 120, pp. 231-232.

28. Quoted in Cockburn, Jeffrey, Vol. I, p. 197.

29. For a useful summary of Whig views on 19th century religious

29. (cont'd)

matters, see Southgate, Passing of the Whigs, chapter IX. For Whigs like Cockburn, the ecclesiastical merits of sectarian disputes were always outweighed by the bitter intolerance such disputes engendered. For his exasperated dismay over the fanatic intolerance caused by quarrels over 'meaningless phrases and ridiculous ceremonies', see Memorials, Vol. II, pp. 115-117.

30. Report on the Edinburgh Annuity Tax, p. 70.

31. Edinburgh Church of Scotland Presbytery, Report of the Proceedings of the Presbytery of Edinburgh . . . in Reference to the Annuity on House Rent (Edinburgh, 1833), p. 24.

32. After noting the range of religious, political and social problems impinging on public consciousness in Victorian Scotland, Dr. W. Ferguson concludes that this "spectrum was too wide to be covered by the existing political parties, neither of which was broadly enough based to comprehend all these problems or well enough organised to formulate clear-cut programmes" (W. Ferguson, Scotland: 1689 to the Present (Edinburgh, 1968), p. 291; see also p. 302).

33. An uncatalogued, rudely sorted, collection of Gibson-Craig's correspondence is in the SRO under the name Riccarton MSS. It is by no means complete; according to Sir James's daughter, Margaret, he destroyed much of his correspondence (letter (27th

33. (cont'd)

September 1854) to J.H. Burton: NLS, Burton MSS, Acc 3931/23).

34. It would appear that Sir James was considered as a possible running-mate with Jeffrey in 1832, but in a letter to Sir John Dalrymple, Cockburn wrote that to be M.P. would kill Sir James (letter (16th June 1832): SRO, Stair MS GD 135/154). Gibson-Craig's activities extended far beyond city politics to being chief Whig organizer in the 1830s in Midlothian (letter (15th July 1835) from James Hope to Sir George Clerk: SRO, Clerk MS GD 18/3374) and Haddington Burghs (see his correspondence with Lords Minto and Melgund in 1846 about this seat in the Minto MSS, especially 127.3 and 128.1).

35. Letter (9th December 1834) to Sir John Dalrymple: SRO Stair MS GD 135/110. I have found no information on how this money was spent.

36. Cockburn, Jeffrey, Vol. I, p. 251.

37. Edinburgh Miscellanea, Vol. IV, entry 155. See also entry 146 and Reform Songs and Squibs (Edinburgh 1834), passim.

38. It is interesting that Jeffrey and Cockburn apparently relinquished all direct influence on Edinburgh politics from 1834. According to Omond, Jeffrey "from the day of his retirement to the bench till his death . . . studiously kept aloof from all

38. (cont'd)

concern in party matters" (G.W.T. Omond, The Lord Advocates of Scotland, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1883), Vol.II, p. 338). The private correspondence of Cockburn and Jeffrey in the Rutherfurd MSS in the NLS is remarkably devoid of party matter; family news, judicial gossip and general comment on national politics are the staple topics, indicating, I believe, an interesting degree of indifference to local political developments.

39. The only major source for Murray that I have found is Omond, Lord Advocates (Second Series), pp. 15-45, which is inadequate in many respects. References to Murray are infrequent in the Whig correspondence I have seen.

40. For Rutherfurd, see ibid., Chapter II. Cockburn was fond and flattering of Rutherfurd, (see Journal, Vol. I, pp. 77-78, and Vol. II, ,pp. 219-222, and An Examination of the Trials for Sedition Which Have Hitherto Occurred in Scotland, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1888), Vol. II, p. 228). For critical comments, see Heiton, Castes, p. 54, and Watt, Inglis, pp. 219-220. The Rutherfurd MSS in the NLS consist almost entirely of letters to Rutherfurd. They are not therefore a very useful source for Rutherfurd, but they do include some interesting letters from Cockburn, Maule and sheriff Gordon of Edinburgh.

41. For details of Moncreiff's career, see Omond, Lord Advocates (Second Series), Chapters IV and VI. Omond's flattering

41. (cont'd)

account must be taken with a grain of salt as incidental references to Moncreiff in other sources do not always bear out Omond's generalizations. For instance, Alexander Russel of the Scotsman wrote to Edward Ellice of Moncreiff as "not naturally genial" (letter (12th February 1861): NLS, Ellice MS F.46, ff. 105-106) which contrasts with Omond's portrayal of Moncreiff as ever-cheerful.

42. For Black see the flattering Memoirs of Adam Black, 2nd ed., (Edinburgh, 1885), by A. Nicolson. For his early activities on behalf of reform in the Merchant Company, see Heron, Company of Merchants, p. 170 ff.

43. Quoted in Nicolson, Black, p. 92.

44. In 1833, George Hope, a Unitarian farmer from East Lothian, noted with some contempt Black's concern lest the Dissenters embarrass the Whig government (see C. Hope, George Hope of Fenton Barns (Edinburgh, 1881), p. 24). And in 1834 Black tried to persuade Dissenters to vote for the Whig rather than the radical candidate ostensibly to prevent the Established Church Tory from taking advantage of the split between Whigs and radicals (Edinburgh Observer, 9th December 1834).

45. The Annuity-Tax in Edinburgh and Its Proposed Settlement, by an Inhabitant (Edinburgh, 1859), p. 11.

46. J. Robertson, The Macaulay Election (Edinburgh, 1846), p. 13.

47. Nicolson, Black, p. 46.

48. Ibid., pp. 76-84.

49. "The Clique" in Reform Songs and Squibs, pp. 124-125.

50. Black even supported the Maynooth Grant: "Mr. Black held the opinion, not common among Dissenters, that as long as any of the public money was bestowed on religious institutions it was unjust to withdraw that particular grant" (Nicolson, Black, p. 128).

51. By the 1860s the man who had championed Parliamentary reform in the 1820s, had narrowed his enthusiasm considerably. Nicolson wrote: "On the subject of Parliamentary Reform, Mr. Black's views were those of a good old Whig, who, though he had fought for it in days when to do so was dangerous, had become afraid of further extending the franchise to that portion of the community, which was greatest in numbers, but in his opinion less competent than the better educated to exercise it wisely" (ibid., pp. 180-181).

52. Chamber of Commerce Minute Book No.5, 20th August 1852.

53. Lord Advocate Moncreiff wrote a memorial pamphlet, The Rt. Hon. Sir William Gibson-Craig (Edinburgh, 1878), from which much of this information is obtained. Few of William's letters are found in the Riccarton MSS in the SRO.

54. Brash, "Conservatives in the Haddington Burghs", pp.52-53.

55. Letter (18th May 1834) from William Gibson-Craig to Sir John Dalrymple: SRO, Stair MS GD 135/154.

56. After the Reform Bill was passed "Mr. Black lost no time in calling a private meeting of the leading reformers to consider what course they ought to take" (Nicolson, Black, p. 81). From the start the 'private' quality of important party decisions conjures visions of a clique.

57. See Scotsman, 10th June 1835. Each of the thirty-two wards of police was to have its convener and an assistant sub-committee, elected by the Whig, or as they now called themselves, Liberal, electors; each convener was to be a member of the Central Committee, which elected a number of officers each year. Membership in the Association was set at half a crown a year.

58. Registration of voters was a vital function for the Whigs, as A. Currie, a Whig advocate explained: "between 500 and 600 are disfranchised here every Whitsun and of them nearly two thirds are Liberal voters" (letter (1st June 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/626). Under the terms of the 1832 Reform Act every elector was required to register again after a change of address; in 1856 registration became automatic by decision of the city assessor, thus enfranchising hundreds of people who had never bothered to register before.

59. Attempts to trace any extant personal papers of Jopp and Brodie through both legal and family descendants have been completely unsuccessful. A few letters from Jopp and Brodie in the Lord Advocates' MSS (especially Box 29, Bundle 1 and Box 126) in the SRO hint at the role played by these two men in drafting local legislation and acting as the Lord Advocate's agents in city affairs, but there is nothing like a full or comprehensive record of their activities. The first extant party records for Edinburgh are those of the Edinburgh Liberal Association in the post-1868 era which are held in the Edinburgh University Library.

60. For instance, during a long lull in party politics between 1841 and 1845, the Aggregate Committee simply ceased to exist (letter (22nd April 1844) from Sheriff Davidson to W. Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10).

61. For instance, in 1840 it numbered about 600 (letter (21st January 1840) from Currie to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/626); in 1852, there were about 100 members (letter (8th June 1852) from James Simpson to Lord Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 135.2).

62. See, for example, the activities of Sir James Gibson-Craig, as chairman of the Liberal Aggregate Committee in 1840, in letter (21st January 1840) from Currie to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/626.

63. For details of all these elections, see appropriate chapters

63. (cont'd)

below.

64. Letter (23rd May 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/626.

65. Letter (3rd June 1839): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

66. For instance, in 1847 a Liberal newspaper was disgusted "that Edinburgh should be in a predicament similar to that in which it was prior to the passing of the Reform Bill" (Scottish Press, 22nd September 1847). In 1834 a rhyme (Reform Songs and Squibs, p. 35) gave vent to the same resentment:

> "At the old burgh system the Clique used to rail;
> Yet now that at last from that scourge we are free,
> They would fain make us o'er, by a sort of entail,
> To a junto of lawyers, to hold us in fee!
> But Gibson and Co.,
> To their sorrow shall know
> That this is a trade which no longer will pay;"

67. For a discussion of the radical ideal of a Parliamentary delegate, see N. Gash, Politics in the Age of Peel (London, 1953), pp. 29-32. The Dissenters and Free Churchmen adopted this view and usually tried to get local men like Charles Cowan, strongly imbued with local religious and social feelings, to stand. The disdain of secular party connections was as strong among the middle class radicals as the Dissenters and Free Churchmen, although the latter were often just as fiercely loyal to their own religious party as any Whig or Tory hack could possibly have been.

68. Scotsman, 10th December, 1834.

69. See bibliographical essay.

70. Attempts to locate any MS sources for these men have unfortunately yielded nothing. Other MS sources of the period which I have consulted are remarkably uninformative: reference to Forrest and Johnston in the Whig correspondence is invariably extremely brief and irrelevant. One would like particularly to know if there were any intimate links between Free Church leaders like Candlish and Chalmers and these Edinburgh politicians. None of the Free Church biographies are in the least helpful on this point. Free Church ministers apparently had very little to do with Edinburgh politics on an obvious level. The only collection of private papers of Free Church ministers is the Chalmers MSS in New College Library, and Mr. I. McIver, who had consulted them in detail, has told me that they include no material with a specific bearing upon Edinburgh politics.

71. See. T. Russell's pamphlet, The Annuity Tax, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, 1836), for a scripturally based statement of the voluntary principle.

72. Dickson's autobiographical writings, unpaginated. McLaren praised Blackadder as a successful business man with public spirit, a bit too fanatically opposed to Sabbath-breaking but a good and true friend (letter (21st October 1851) to Combe: NLS, Combe MS 7318, ff. 29-30).

73. Letter (17th June 1852) from Mair to Combe: NLS, Combe MS 7327, ff. 151-154.

74. Obituary, Scotsman, 28th December 1891.

75. Letter (13th April 1842): West Sussex Record Office, Cobden MSS.

76. There is a biographical note, by R. Pringle, concentrating mainly on his services to the College, in Occasional Papers on Veterinary Subjects by William Dick (Edinburgh, 1869).

77. There is likely to be a great deal of information contained in any collection of McLaren's correspondence which has not yet been opened to scholars. In a sense this thesis is only an interim study until and if such a collection becomes available. The two volume biography by J.B. Mackie is by no means definitive and is full of crucial lapses, but all the major aspects of McLaren's career are mentioned if not properly explained.

78. Charles Cooper, who succeeded Alexander Russel as editor of the Scotsman in 1876, said of McLaren: "he had not wit, nor a grain of humour" (C.A. Cooper, An Editor's Retrospect (London, 1896), p. 250). All written evidence supports this view: e.g. a neutral newspaperman who knew McLaren in the late 1830s emphasized McLaren's "somewhat dry and even austere manner" (J. Hedderwick, Backward Glances (Edinburgh, 1891), p. 167).

79. The Weekly Herald, a Liberal newspaper of the 1850s,

79. (cont'd)

described McLaren as "the Gradgrind of Edinburgh . . . . When Mr. McLaren enters upon a discussion, he lays aside any little imagination or sentiment that he may have about him just as a boxer gives his coat and hat to a by-stander to hold, rolls up the shirt-sleeves of feeling that it may not be in the way, and sets to with the coolest of heads, the hardest of knuckles, and the most direct of aims. Woe to you, then, if you are unskilled of fence in facts and figures! No matter how witty or how sarcastic you may be -- all that is but a flimsy defence against undeniable facts, pitched into every assailable and tender part of you until you are breathless, silent and stupid" (26th January 1856).

80. He rarely pushed a point when he was clearly in the minority. As an example, McLaren once wrote that there was little sense in opposing a majority; one should endeavour to convert the majority to the views of the minority. "I think parties should, by argument and otherwise, try to promote their opinions, <u>without giving battle on their own account, as a separate section of a party</u>, untill [sic] there is <u>good reasons</u> for holding that they form the majority of the party with which they have been acting in harmony, or have power in some other way to return their men according to the reasonable probabilities of the case" (letter (24th August 1844) to Combe: NLS, Combe MS 7273, ff. 23-24).

81. On national education, for instance, McLaren was in two minds

81. (cont'd)

in 1847: "my former opinions in favour of National Education have been a good deal shaken of late and I sometimes doubt even whether the principle of state interference be correct at all, in education any more than religion. But although I have doubts, if I must class myself, it will be as in favour of national education" (letter (spring 1847?) to Combe: NLS, Combe MS 7286, ff. 94-95).

82. In 1852 he regarded "a measure of Parliamentary reform as the means of promoting many other reforms" (letter (12th January 1852) to Combe: NLS, Combe MS 7327, ff. 119-120).

83. McLaren wrote articles for the Scotsman until the early 1840s and was instrumental in the founding of the U.P. newspaper, the Scottish Press. The Edinburgh News in the late 1850s and the Caledonian Mercury in the early 1860s came under his influence.

84. The main exception to this generalization was McLaren's 'lay leadership' of the Scottish temperance movement (J.R. Fleming, A History of the Church in Scotland, 1843-74 (Edinburgh, 1927) p. 80). As Lord Provost, McLaren enforced new regulations against Sunday opening; these regulations formed the basis of the Forbes Mackenzie Act and McLaren has been regarded as the 'real author' of the Act ever since (S. Mechie, The Church and Scottish Social Development, 1780-1870 (London, 1960), p. 97, and

84 (cont'd)

Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 305-311).

85. Few of these letters survive in the Bright and Cobden MSS in the BM, Manchester Reference Library or West Sussex Record Office.

86. McLaren was chairman of Edinburgh's Patriotic Fund and refrained from any public criticism of the war effort.

87. McLaren was on the first council of the British Anti-State Church Association and on the executive committee of the Liberation Society throughout the 1850s and 1860s (Liberation Society annual reports and records). The Life of Edward Miall (London, 1884) by his son Arthur Miall mentions Miall's trips to Scotland in 1846, 1849, and 1851 (p. 145) but there is no analysis of Miall's relationship with McLaren either in this book or in Mackie's McLaren (see Vol. II, pp. 217-218 for a brief mention).

88. For McLaren's part in ensuring Hume's victory at Montrose in 1842, see ibid., Vol. II, pp. 2-4. Chapter XV of Vol. II is a sketch of McLaren's relations with English liberals which suggests the range of his friendships without supplying the kind of analysis which access to McLaren's correspondence could provide. McLaren also corresponded occasionally with an interesting variety of great men with very different political principles but who shared some interests with McLaren: examples are Lord Brougham (prison reform brought them together in 1839, ibid., Vol. II,

88. (cont'd)

pp. 1-2), Sir James Graham (McLaren wrote him about the election of 1857, ibid., Vol. II, p. 20) and Lord Justice-Clerk John Hope. According to Mackie, Hope was so impressed with McLaren's performance as Lord Provost that he wrote McLaren to say he hoped he would soon be M.P. for Edinburgh, (ibid., Vol. I, p. 324).

CHAPTER THREE

Whiggery Triumphant: 1832-1835

The years immediately after 1832 were years of Whig popularity when most voters were still too grateful for the reform of Parliament and the municipal constituency to consider seriously opposition to the Whigs based on other matters. The Conservatives half-heartedly contested elections; a few middle class radicals consistently attacked Whig moderation from 1832 onwards. And by 1835 the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists were beginning to show signs of the disaffection which was to be of great importance later. Nevertheless, the period from 1832 to 1835 is best characterized as one of massive popularity for the Whig party.

It does not seem worthwhile to linger unduly over the events of these years, partly since dramatic conflicts of greater importance need to be explained at length in the chapters ahead. Another reason for only summarizing developments here is the relative lack of valuable documentary or MS evidence for this immediate post-reform period. This unfortunately precludes the kind of detailed analysis which one could wish for. Nevertheless, even a somewhat superficial sketch of the major aspects of this period, using what evidence is available and emphasizing the long term significance of movements and dissensions only just beginning to stir the political waters of post-1832 Edinburgh, is absolutely essential if sense is to be made of what happened in Edinburgh after 1835.

In the extraordinary circumstances of 1832, a Whig victory at the first reformed election in December was a foregone conclusion. In countless meetings, petitions and demonstrations in the previous months and years the overwhelming sentiment of Edinburgh's citizens in favour of electoral reform had been fully revealed.[1] There was little reason to doubt that Edinburgh's two seats in the new Parliament would be taken by the Whig candidates, the renowned Lord Advocate, Francis Jeffrey, and the well-known Whig veteran, James Abercromby.[2] What doubts the Whigs entertained for the safe return of these two champions stemmed from two sources. One was the rather embarrassing sluggishness with which Edinburgh's potential voters registered as electors.[3] This reluctance, apparently a combination of pecuniary reticence, desire to remain inconspicuous and sheer indifference, momentarily disquieted the Whigs in the late summer, although by December their fears were dispelled.[4] The other source of doubt lay in the candidacy of the local radical, James Aytoun.

Aytoun's chairmanship of the Edinburgh Political Reform Union in 1831 provided a strong foundation for his candidacy as a radical alternative to the official Whig candidates. He stood as an independent, anxious to prevent Edinburgh from becoming 'a mere Ministerial borough'[5] and anxious to implement such reforms as triennial Parliaments, the ballot, disestablishment, free trade and abolition of slavery. Aytoun never hesitated to commit him-

self to pledges, although he insisted on his independence from any party structure, in contrast to the Whigs who avoided pledges but associated themselves with the Whig party and its recent triumph.

There was little fear of Aytoun attracting enough votes to overcome either of the Whigs outright. But since every voter had two votes to cast, there was a chance that Aytoun might attract the second votes of electors who were suspicious of Abercromby as an outsider, thus allowing a Tory candidate to slip past the weaker Whig. And even the spectre of a Conservative-Radical coalition haunted some Whig thinking.[6] The Conservative candidate was an innocuous member of the famous old Blair family, Forbes Hunter Blair, who eschewed public meetings and emphasized his 'independence' from party to the exclusion of any other issue.[7] His low-key candidacy may well have had only the stop-gap purpose of keeping demoralized Tories from drifting away altogether.

Whig fears were relieved by the autumn when it became apparent that Aytoun was failing to attract much support, even from his own Reform Union,[8] and a week before the election, Aytoun acknowledge failure by withdrawing from the contest and recommending, not without some asperity, the Whig candidates to his erstwhile supporters.[9] Meanwhile Jeffrey and Abercromby had been turning their campaign into a triumphal festival of thanksgiving for the Reform Act. In their speeches, they vaguely supported various liberal ideals in principle, but concentrated

their remarks upon the recent victories at Westminster, continually reiterating the catch phrases 'free and independent electors of Edinburgh', 'the first free Edinburgh election', etc.,never failing to demonstrate the link between the liberation and the liberators and to suggest the debt of gratitude still outstanding. Just as Jeffrey and Abercromby called themselves modest tools in the great work of forging the Bill, so they hoped to forge a political link with the liberal electorate of Edinburgh on the strength of past achievements.

After Aytoun's retirement only the extent of the Whig victory was in question. The result of the voting on 19th and 20th December was Jeffrey -- 4,035, Abercromby -- 3,850, and Blair -- 1,519.[10] The ratio of Whig to Conservative votes was two to one in the New Town, four to one in the Old Town and eight to three in the constituency in general. The Whig vote was very high in such lower class neighbourhoods as Crosscauseway (approximately 440 to 74) and the Tory vote was closest in the upper class district of St. Vincent's in the New Town (approximately 210 Whig votes to 169 Conservative votes).[11] The less prosperous voters of the Old Town obviously delivered their votes to their political benefactors while the gentlemen of the New Town were less susceptible to the liberal mood of the moment. Although the Tory had been hopelessly outmatched, the 1,500 Tory votes were a sound foundation for the growth of a Conservative reaction in the city. And although the electorate had firmly established its

favour towards the Whigs the extraordinary circumstances of this election -- the creation of the electorate by the Whig Reform Act -- could never be repeated.

By the time of the next Parliamentary election of 1834, circumstances had altered somewhat. The Whigs felt endangered and, significantly, by the rise of religious issues and sectarian jealousies. The growth of the voluntary church agitation and of the anti-annuity tax movement (see below) had been accelerated since the Reform Act of 1832 and the Whig government had been unable to satisfy the demands of the Dissenters. Simultaneously the patronage dispute came to a climax in the General Assembly of 1834. By 1834 the religious controversies gave a new and keener cutting edge to the radical challenge, as Cockburn explained in a letter to T.F. Kennedy:

> we were triumphant last time because the Radicals joined us, and had no force had they opposed us. Now they have got strength in Edinburgh through these cursed church questions. They will vote for nobody who does not pledge himself against Patronage, and against the marriage of Church and State, and against keeping up the present number of the Edinburgh Clergy, and against Annuity, etc. 12

So when Lord Craigie died and Jeffrey took the vacant seat in the Court of Session, the Whigs were faced by two candidates for Jeffrey's vacant place in Parliament with definite views on the church question in particular. On the one hand there was the Tory John Learmonth [13] who stood principally in defence of the unreformed church of which he spoke in election meetings as:

> that Church, the purest, and the simplest on the face of the earth. Sir, if there be any gentleman in this room who expect me to lift my hands to touch a stone of that venerable fabric, I beg he will be undeceived, for so long as there is breath in my body I never shall do so! no, not to gain the whole world. [14]

And on the other hand, there was Aytoun who, although a member of the Church of Scotland, asseverated frequently "that every man ought to pay for his own religion, and that it is unjust and oppressive to compel the dissenters to contribute in any way for mine". [15]

It was not only church affairs which threatened the Whigs, of course, since radical and conservative discontent with the secular policies of the Whigs had grown since the last election. For the Whigs had disappointed Aytoun and the radicals: the corn laws, taxes on knowledge, sinecures, flogging in the services, etc. remained while the ballot and triennial Parliaments were still the unrealized ideals they had been in 1832. Learmonth's supporters took comfort from such a state of affairs but could not trust the Whigs to continue to resist the radicals. At the time of the election the strains upon the Whig government were beginning to show; indeed, the news of the resignations of Stanley, Ripon, Richmond and Graham arrived the day before voting took place. A cabinet crisis mirrored the crisis of confidence in the constituency and both threatened to deprive the Whigs of much support. The need for a by-election at this time was inconvenient; an inconvenience was made a positive danger when the Whigs were caught in a confusion over who should replace Jeffrey as Abercromby's colleague.

The Whig leaders, Jeffrey and Murray, were determined to bring in the liberal Whig Sir John Hobhouse who had been defeated at Westminster in 1833.[16] Jeffrey, Abercromby and Lord Brougham applied to Hobhouse before the Whig Committee met in Edinburgh; but Hobhouse was very reluctant to solicit the favour of a constituency with such definite opinions and demands as Edinburgh; according to Hobhouse, Jeffrey

> in a very melancholy tone told me they did not know to whom to apply. I was the only man. 'So much the worse for Scotland', said I . . . . If I come back to Parliament it must be on my own terms, otherwise I should be of no use. [17]

Overconfident of Hobhouse's desire to return to Parliament, the Whigs had already set in motion the constituency Committee to ratify the choice of the leaders. On 12th May, the Aggregate Committee overwhelmingly supported Hobhouse, giving Aytoun and Sir John Campbell, an alternative official Whig candidate, about equally minor votes of thirty apiece.[18] Presented with this decision Hobhouse remained adamant against making "declarations for the sake of votes"[19] and the Whig leaders were in the embarrassing position of having to settle for the second best candidate, Campbell. At first, however, the Whigs were in the depths of despair: "I expect to be beat", said Cockburn.[20] And a Whig advocate-depute, John Cunningham, wrote Dalrymple that "we are quite at sea -- and my opinion now is, -- that Aytoun [sic] will carry the day".[21] To let Aytoun in by default would be better

than suffering outright defeat. No local Whig was willing to stand. With the elder Gibson-Craig distrusted and the younger one unknown and Murray safe in Leith, the only possibility was Campbell, lately Attorney General and now Solicitor General. In the by-election resulting from his new appointment, he had been defeated at Dudley due to a combination of corruption and the discontent of English Dissenters with the Whigs' slowness in acting against church rates.[22] This ignominious rejection, as well as his previous rejection in the Committee in favour of Hobhouse, plus his rather desperate situation as a minister in search of a seat were not promising attractions. And of course it was easily asserted by the Whigs' opponents that the constituency was being used as a haven for Whig office-seekers, a role for Edinburgh which brought shame upon the citizens and infamy upon the Whig party.

The circumstances of the election were therefore most unpropitious, but in spite of that Campbell defied pessimistic predictions and turned the election into a neat victory for the Whigs. He depended on the tried and true formula of vague professions of liberality[23] coupled with references to his participation in the struggle for reform.[24] His rhetoric tended to be extravagant and he affected an earthy naturalness which apparently appealed to many electors. According to Cockburn:

> he goes about in an old natural blue frock coat, -- with duck trousers, said to be dirtier than even mine, --

> strong shoes, -- gloveless palms; and on the whole looks, and laughs, much more like a popular candidate than like an Attorney General . . . . That -- Church has been the only devilry; but he has steered through its breakers very skilfully. 25

In his open letter to the electors when formally adopted by the Whig Committee, Campbell affirmed his support for the establishment principle but said

> I am anxious that its burdens should press as lightly on the great body of the people as possible . . . . it will be my most sedulous endeavour to remove every practical grievance from them [the Dissenters], and to reform every law which is either injurious to their interests, or even in any respect hurtful to their feelings. 26

He proposed no specific remedy for the Dissenters' grievances and he was almost as vague in terms of the patronage question: "let the abuse of patronage be corrected, but he would entreat them not rashly to interfere with the fundamental rules of the Kirk of Scotland".[27] Conveniently the temporary solution of the Veto Act arrived in time to relieve Campbell of the necessity of doing more than support the majority in the General Assembly.[28] This appeared to satisfy the Non-Intrusionists but the Dissenters were not quite so easily mollified by his vague good intentions. Nevertheless, according to William Gibson-Craig, "the more respectable among them, however, are most unwilling to lower their cause by connecting it with Ayton [sic]".[29] The committee of Dissenters which met to determine the best course for voluntaries decided not to act collectively in this election[30] and this was

probably due to the efforts of Black and other Whig Dissenters to prevent the radical Dissenters from recommending support for Aytoun.

In any case, Aytoun's campaign ran into more difficulties than those caused by lack of formal Dissenter support. He was short of cash and his committee was unable to send canvassers to all parts of the city and conduct as vigorous and professional a campaign as the other parties.[31] It is also extremely likely that the plight of the faltering Whig government, and the spectre of a Tory resurgence elsewhere should Edinburgh defeat the Whig minister, resulted in some radical support for the Whig.[32] The great radical, Hume, sent encouraging letters of support[33] and Aytoun himself was very energetic, canvassing personally, attacking the Whigs for what they had failed to achieve: "they have carried on a Tory government under Reform Colours".[34] This time, unlike 1832, Aytoun was prepared to contest the election to the very end, even if this might benefit the Conservative candidate: "it is full time that the independent party of Edinburgh should know its own strength".[35] As the candidate of the self-styled 'independent party', Aytoun was particularly critical of Campbell's party connections and of the resultant inability of a man in his position to pledge himself to any definite reform. Wrote Aytoun:

> I feel myself enabled now to express more than a few vague generalities about my 'attachment to reform principles'.

> This is the tone adopted by a certain class of candidates -- by that class who wish to avoid every thing like a pledge, or a precise declaration of opinion -- who wish to be returned 'unfettered' to Parliament, free to adopt every project of the Ministry -- to become, in short, the thick and the thin supporters of that party who are the fountain of offices and emolument. 36

Tory propaganda, as aired in the occasional election periodical, the Citizen, exploited the same weakness in promoting Learmonth:

> he is fettered by no office, dazzled by no prospects of promotion, subject to no ministerial mandates. He is under no restraints in resisting the attempts to degrade the capital of Scotland, and convert it into a mere provincial town, which are now so obviously and systematically made by government. 37

But if the honour of Edinburgh was to be defended, Learmonth was hardly a likely champion. He was not an attractive or an effective speaker and had difficulties winning enthusiastic supporters from even his own party.[38] Thus, when the 'rejected of Dudley' became the 'elected of Edinburgh', the Conservative Edinburgh Advertiser wrote of Edinburgh that "it has sunk to the degraded rank of a refuge for the destitute -- a mere Treasury Burgh, into which Ministers may thrust their nominees when they can find seats nowhere else".[39] Neither a Conservative nor a radical had been able to take advantage of the weakness of the Whigs, and after voting on 30th and 31st June, the result was Campbell -- 1,932; Learmonth -- 1,401; and Aytoun -- 480.[40]

The scarcity of the radical vote was the great surprise:

Cockburn had predicted that it would approach 1,000.[41] The radical challenge proved to be a chimera, due to a combination of factors, the chief of which was the residual preference of the potentially radical electors for the Whigs, whatever their shortcomings, if the alternative was a Tory victory. One assumes without being able to prove it that the parlous state of the Whig government, reeling under the defections of Stanley, Graham, Ripon and Richmond, might have induced many radicals to rally round the Whigs, especially as the defections seemed to leave the government more liberal than before (see Aytoun's post-election speech below). As yet, radicalism had strongest support among the non-electors who gave Aytoun the majority of the hustings hands on nomination day.[42] The statistical analysis of his supporters in this election (see Appendix IV) shows no particular class or economic background to the radical vote. There was remarkably uniform support on a very small scale among all occupations. Among the electorate at least, Aytoun was only marginally more popular with the craftsmen than he was with the professions. As of 1834, opposition to the Whigs had not yet acquired the merchants/craftsmen vs. professionals form it was to assume by the 1840s. The district voting indicated even more dramatically the extent of Aytoun's defeat.[43] Even in the Grassmarket where radicals were always thickest on the ground Aytoun failed to exceed Campbell's total, falling well short of 30% of the vote there. The Conservative was strongest in the New Town,

while the Whig drew his strength from every section of the constituency. Campbell failed to attract at least 1,500 of the voters who had supported Jeffrey and Abercromby in 1832, a fact which took away somewhat from the charm of decided victory. But at least Learmonth had not gained those 1,500 voters to his side, nor had Aytoun made them his own.

The poll was officially announced on 2nd June. Campbell arrived at the hustings with a band playing "See, the Conquering Hero Comes". Aytoun arrived with a delegation of tradesmen carrying such banners as "If household suffrage had borne the sway, Aytoun would have gained the day" and "The honest 480".[44] He spoke approvingly of the liberal nature of the Whig government since the resignations of Stanley, Graham, Ripon and Richmond. And then in an effusion of good feeling Aytoun went on to laud Abercromby and recommend that he should take office in the government if he were offered it:

> I hope Mr. Abercromby will accept office, for he will liberalize the Cabinet; we should take this opportunity of letting him know, that we wish him to do so, and that he will be returned from Edinburgh without opposition. 45

Within a fortnight the sincerity of this promise was tested: Abercromby was appointed Master of the Mint. He was, in fact, elected without opposition on 23rd June with radicals joining Whigs on the hustings platform.[46] The Conservatives declined to contest the election. No doubt their recent defeat made them pessimistic about their chances of success and Learmonth said he

did not want "to trouble those friends who supported me on the late occasion".[47]

The Whigs had one more electoral test to survive before this hectic period came to an end. This was the election of January 1835 brought on by the short-lived Conservative government of 1834-1835. In Edinburgh the immediate response to the change in government was a large open-air meeting in the Grassmarket upon which newspaper reports differed greatly.[48] The Whigs, led by Sir James Gibson-Craig, proposed resolutions calling on the King to dismiss Wellington, while some radicals, led by Aytoun, would not agree to this resolution without an amendment calling for triennial Parliaments, the ballot and an extended franchise. McLaren seconded Gibson-Craig's appeal for unity, and Aytoun's erstwhile lieutenant, R.W. Jameson, unexpectedly supported the Whigs, ascribing their peremptory dismissal by the King to their increasing liberality due to the growing influence of Lord Durham in the cabinet. The voting on the amendment was very close, but the chairman, Whig Lord Provost Spittal, declared the vote in favour of the Whig resolution.[49] Whatever the actual vote, at an open meeting in a radical district the radicals had been unable to shake the lingering faith of at least half of their fellow citizens in the radical potential of a Whig government. Whigs and radicals could still unite under common attack. But it was a coalition upon the Whigs' own terms, the radicals failing to elicit any concessions at all from the Whigs. Of course, this

was due in a large part to the inability of the radicals to present a united front. With McLaren, the Dissenter, and Jameson, the secular radical, offering aid and comfort to the Whigs, Aytoun's attempt to maintain an independent radical movement in Edinburgh was temporarily unsuccessful.

It is not surprising, then, that no radical candidate appeared in the election of January 1835 to challenge the return of Abercromby and Campbell. Aytoun went off to contest unsuccessfully the Newcastle-Upon-Tyne election, and the radicals in Edinburgh appear to have participated only in the Whig campaigns. No radical meeting was reported in the newspapers throughout the campaign or afterwards for as long as the Conservatives remained in power. This quiescence was an extraordinary and highly important feature of this election, for it emphasized what the 1834 election had suggested -- that the radicals in Edinburgh were a weak minority of the electorate, and that the Whigs, though frequently attacked for their shortcomings, could still rely on an impressive and commanding body of favourable opinion within the city. The Dissenters too remained loyal to the Whig candidates: a committee under McLaren's chairmanship and including Adam Black interviewed Abercromby and Campbell and advised Dissenters to vote for them.[50]

The election campaign really began only at the end of December when the Tories decided to put up two candidates, John Learmonth again, and James Andrew, Lord Ramsay, son

of the earl of Dalhousie. At twenty-two years old, a recent Oxford graduate, Ramsay was immediately christened the 'Oxford stripling'.[51] Ramsay was a true-blue Tory -- fervent in his defence of the unreformed Church of Scotland and in his contempt for an extended franchise, the ballot, shorter Parliaments, free trade, Dissenter entrance to English universities, etc. At no time had the Conservatives a chance of success: in November the duke of Buccleuch's agent, Donald Horne, reported that Edinburgh was a 'seat of Whiggery' which was invulnerable, but "perhaps . . . some active person might try it".[52] That active person was Ramsay who regarded the episode as a useful introduction to politics, without much short-term advantage.[53] He brought to the campaign a youthful exuberance and style which amused the people but made no more impact on the electorate than any Tory had done before.[54] Poor Learmonth was hopelessly outclassed by Ramsay and became the butt of jokes; together the two Tories seem to have been objects of amused derision rather than impassioned opposition, probably because their chances of success were so slim.[55] The Whigs, Abercromby and Campbell, sailed through their meetings without radical interruptions;[56] but the Tories had a rough passage. Several of their meetings ended with motions being passed to the effect that Learmonth and Ramsay were <u>not</u> 'fit and proper representatives' in spite of the ineffectual protests of the Tory chairman while the candidates were effecting a strategic retreat from the hall.[57]

The nominations took place on 12th January with the hustings crowd overwhelmingly Whig. Voting was on 13th and 14th January, and on the 16th the declaration of the poll took place: Abercromby -- 2,963; Campbell -- 2,858; Ramsay -- 1,716; and Learmonth -- 1,608.[58] The victory was decisive, with the Whig vote up again from 1834. But the results did emphasize the existence of a firm Conservative minority which had manifested itself in the 1832 and 1834 elections; approximately 1,500 electors in all three elections had held fast to Tory principles. The district voting was like that in 1832 and 1834, with the Tory vote coming largely from the New Town, the Whig from the Old Town. The election left no doubt of the basic loyalty of the electorate to the Whigs. The radicals had failed to make any progress since 1832, and the Conservatives had assumed the role of a permanent minority party. The circumstances of the election, with the choice a clear-cut one between the resumption of an indecisive but basically liberal Whig government, and the return to Tory government, was bound to favour the Whigs; and their victory was to a large extent due to the kind of simple reaction against Toryism which has been responsible for their 1832 victory. Thus, over the period 1832-1835 the Whigs were able to maintain their triumphant position through appeals to the general loyalty of the electors to a moderate form of Whiggery.

If the Whigs were triumphant, it is also true that by 1835 there were unmistakeable signs that the constituency was becoming

restless and increasingly critical of the Whigs. As mentioned above, it was chiefly in regard to religious issues and sectarian disputes that this discontent emerged; and it first emerged on a full scale in the reformed Town Council. Although the new Council of 1833, wholly comprised of Whigs and radicals, was initially occupied with drastically reducing municipal expenditures and negotiating a satisfactory settlement of the city's long-standing municipal debt,[59] it rapidly became bogged down in irresolvable controversy over the annuity tax. Prior to the election of the new Town Council in late 1833, Lord Advocate Jeffrey had offered a mild reform of the tax (a simple reduction by withdrawing the exemption of the College of Justice). As was to happen so often in the future, the more conservative lawyers opposed this 'unjust interference with existing vested rights' while the more radical Dissenters condemned the bill as 'meagre and unsatisfactory'.[60] Perhaps a little too easily discouraged, Jeffrey thereupon withdrew his bill. Later during the summer civic feelings were aroused by the prospect of prominent radicals, such as the publisher William Tait, being incarcerated in Calton Gaol for failure to pay their tax. An Inhabitants' Committee, the first of many ad hoc anti-annuity tax groups, orchestrated protest demonstrations and petitions.[61]

Thus by the time the reformed Town Council approached the issue, the city was well aroused and the Whig government had already abandoned for the moment attempts to deal with it. The

Council's rather cautious approach to the Established Church Presbytery in hopes of compromise was met with an aggressively defensive response: under the invigorating influence of Thomas Chalmers, whose church extension initiative was just getting underway, the Presbytery refused to consider reducing either ministers' salaries or the collegiate churches to single ministeries.[62] The Council's tit for Chalmers' tat was a refusal to bend to the church extension pressure in April 1834 and promise to provide municipal support for a new church in the Cowgate.[63] In the late spring of 1834, the Town Council forwarded a bill to Parliament reducing the tax (principally by abolishing legal exemptions and decollegiation) but this was withdrawn when Sir John Campbell tacked an annuity tax abolition clause onto the English Church Rates Bill. By the time that Bill died, it was too late to reintroduce the Council's bill.[64]

As the voluntary church movement intensified and challenged the church extension movement, it became increasingly difficult to regard the annuity tax as an isolated problem capable of compromise solution. In the context of the state church conflict, the annuity tax was an aspect of establishment which Churchmen were as bound to defend as Dissenters to attack.[65] Opinion was rapidly polarizing and attitudes hardening, as the municipal election of November 1834 demonstrated. After a hectic round of meetings, the voting was not any heavier than the previous year, and the overall result was a gain of one seat to the Established Church

party.[66] But in the First and Second districts the radicals came top of the poll, while in the Third and Fifth districts determined pro-annuity tax candidates easily won. Thus the electorate gave no clear mandate to the Town Council, but only increased the divergence between the two sides, making compromise less likely. The new Town Council soon showed its mettle: on 12th November the radicals voted with their extreme conservative opponents to defeat a draft bill of the moderates which would have abolished the legal exemption, reduced the clergy's stipends to £500 and maintained the collegiate charges.[67] Thus, the extremists combined to defeat the only proposal that had a chance of success. At this point the possibility of the Town Council being able to accomplish any reform became most unlikely; it was becoming the resort of ultra religious partizans who could and did block the kind of compromise which might have obtained the grudging approval of all the interested parties. This pattern of behaviour became a commonplace in later years: again and again, compromise measures hopefully suggested by the various Whig Lord Provosts, Lord Advocates or Parliamentary Committees, etc. were attacked and in the end defeated by the left-wing Dissenters and the right-wing Established Churchmen, who, from entirely different viewpoints, united to oppose the suggested compromise.

During this period it was becoming clear that religious issues would dominate politics, since politicians were failing to control and contain them. The Town Council had already fallen prey to the

warring religionists. Elections to that body had ceased to have much to do with Whigs, radicals and Tories; it was one's attitude to the annuity tax which counted. In the city generally, there were other secular issues which were given some prominence, mostly through public meetings.[68] But there was no doubt that even in 1832 these issues paled into insignificance in comparison to religious issues. In 1832 Abercromby wrote of the Edinburgh election that "the thing which surprises me the most is the decided hostility to any church establishment which is the matter most pressed".[69] And in 1834 Sir James Gibson-Craig wrote Dalrymple that

> the various church questions, general and local, as to which a great proportion of our electors here, are literally frantic, occasion the greatest difficulties, and the election will depend more on ecclesiastical, than on political considerations. [70]

Reform had rapidly been replaced by religion as the prime political issue. The clamour for political solutions to religious problems was growing, while the impotence of the Town Council and the inability of the Whig government to solve the problems increased the frustration of interested parties. These parties naturally began to seek comfort in congenial political connections -- the conservative Churchmen in the Conservative party and the Dissenters in an independent party closely linked to the middle class radicals.[71] The drift away from the Whig party by the religious malcontents was potentially the greatest threat to the Whigs, and

during the first years of the post-Reform era, they did little to stop it. As time went on it would become more difficult to arrange compromises on religious controversies and consequently more difficult to arrest the disintegration of the Whig party's electoral base.

But this is anticipating events after 1835. If the various religious issues were crowding out the secular considerations which had brought the Whigs to power in 1832, they had not yet completely superseded the immediate loyalty of the majority of the electorate to their political benefactors. If Dissenters were growing more critically hostile towards the Whigs, they were not as yet undertaking independent political action; in 1835 they rallied round the Whigs to oppose the Tory alternative. Few electors were tempted to join Aytoun who combined his voluntaryism with other radical demands too revolutionary in character to attract much middle class support. And the radicals themselves were in two minds, represented by the conciliatory attitude of Jameson and the distrustful attitude of Aytoun at the Grassmarket meeting of November 1834. The Conservatives had made no progress since 1832, and they had assumed the role of a patient but fairly hopeless minority party unable for the moment to make inroads upon the lingering goodwill and faith of the electors in the Whigs. How long this situation would last, how long the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists would remain content to pursue their aims within the traditional political parties, would depend on how skilfully the Whigs

could utilise the support, given them by an electorate initially grateful for the Reform Act, to resolve the religious conflicts. In the period 1832-1835 they had only tantalized the malcontents with vague promises; as the voluntary and patronage controversies began to rise to a climax the promises were no longer sufficient and a real crisis in confidence was becoming more and more likely in the near future.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

1. For the mood of the city at the height of the reform crisis, see Cockburn, Journal, Vol. I, chapter I, and Nicolson, Black, pp. 76-81; and for some examples of pro-reform resolutions passed by individual organizations, see those of the Incorporation of Taylors of Canongate (Minute Book, NLS MS 1963, 28th September 1831, 15th May 1832), the Chamber of Commerce (Minute Book No.3, 18th April and 16th May 1832), the Merchant Company (Minute Book No.11, 24th April and 16th May 1832) and the Incorporation of Tailors of Edinburgh (Minute Book, SRO GD 1/12/67, 23rd April 1832).

2. Abercromby (1776-1858) was a Whig lawyer trained in England but interested in Scottish affairs. He had been an M.P. since 1807 and had proposed several liberal reform bills during the 1820s, twice introducing bills to popularize the election of Edinburgh's M.P. (DNB, Vol. I, pp. 40-41). The major blot on his record was his acceptance from the Duke of Wellington of the pension of a baron of exchequer when that office was abolished in 1830. He was somewhat unfairly labelled as a Tory pensioner by radical propaganda which tended to ignore his considerable services in the cause of parliamentary reform.

3. Eligible citizens were required to submit claim forms to the town clerk at a charge of 2/6d. Lists of these claimants were posted and objections invited which were then judged by the sheriff.

3. (cont'd)

At the end of the registration period in the late summer of 1832, the Tories contested 1,450 claimants and the Whigs about 300, of which about a third of each were sustained (see Scotsman, 12th September and 13th October 1832). For details of the Scottish Reform Act, see The Elector's Guide (Edinburgh, 1832), an anonymous explanation of the terms of the statute.

4. Cockburn wrote in August: "it is very difficult to get people to register. It is astonishing how difficult it is. Hundreds won't take the trouble, and dozens won't pay the half-crowns" (letter (3rd August 1832) to T.F. Kennedy in Letters, p. 419). And Jeffrey wrote Cockburn that "this makes me a little anxious about Edinburgh after all" (quoted in Cockburn, Jeffrey, Vol. II, p. 254).

5. See his statement of candidature in Scotsman, 13th June 1832.

6. See Scotsman, 18th July 1832.

7. The sitting Tory M.P., Robert Dundas, quietly severed his connection to serve later as M.P. for Ipswich and Lincolnshire. The Conservatives had not given much thought to trying for both seats (see letter (15th July 1832) from R.A. Dundas to Sir J.S. Forbes: SRO, Ogilvy of Inverquharity MS GD 205, portfolio 15) and saw the danger of putting Dundas forward again (see letters between Dundas and Forbes in Omond, Arniston Memoirs, pp. 353-355). Blair (1781-1833) was one of the fourteen children of

7. (cont'd)

the Lord Provost and M.P. for Edinburgh, Sir James Hunter Blair (1741-1787), one of the great 'improving' Lord Provosts of Augustan Edinburgh. His son Forbes was a banker who had lived since 1822 on his estate in Wigtonshire (DNB, Vol. II, p. 624, and obituary, Edinburgh Advertiser, 19th April 1833). There is no evidence in regard to the exact reasons why Blair was chosen and who governed the choice. Nor have I found any Edinburgh references to the scheme, mentioned by Omond, devised by some London Tories, who "agreed to pay the Tory candidates in Scotland their expenses if they polled a certain number of votes" (Lord Advocates, Vol. II, p. 331).

8. See Scotsman, 18th and 21st July, 25th August 1832, and letter (14th November 1832) from Jeffrey to Brougham: University College, Brougham MSS.

9. Aytoun said that the radicals' chief aim at present should be "to aid in the annihilation of the Tory faction, that hereafter we might be enabled to deal with the Whigs single-handed" (Scotsman, 12th December 1832).

10. Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 106; see also Scotsman, 22nd December 1832, for election statistics.

11. The Whig vote is approximate since Jeffrey consistently outpolled Abercromby by a small margin; I have averaged the two figures together.

12. Letter (10th May 1834) in Letters, pp. 505-506.

13. Learmonth (died 1856), a coachmaker, was the last Lord Provost of the unreformed Town Council; he is chiefly known as the builder of the Dean Bridge and the developer of the estate just to its north (Whitson, Lord Provosts, pp. 113-114). Forbes Hunter Blair had died suddenly in 1833 (Edinburgh Advertiser, 19th April 1833).

14. Scotsman, 17th May 1834.

15. Scotsman, 21st May 1834.

16. Hobhouse (1786-1869), the celebrated companion of Byron upon his European travels, was a radical Whig in the 1820s sitting with Sir Francis Burdett for Westminster. He became increasingly moderate in the 1830s and 1840s when he held various positions in Lord Melbourne's and Lord Russell's cabinets (DNB, Vol. IX, pp. 941-944).

17. Sir J.C. Hobhouse, Recollections of a Long Life (edited by Lady Dorchester), 6 vols. (1909-1911), Vol. IV (1911), p. 341.

18. Scotsman, 14th May 1834.

19. Hobhouse, Recollections, Vol. IV, p. 341.

20. Letter (15th May 1834) to T.F. Kennedy in Letters, p. 509.

21. Letter (Thursday ?): SRO, Stair MS GD 135/112.

22. Campbell wrote to Brougham of his defeat: "the result is a

22. (cont'd)

good deal owing to intimidation but much more to preposterous enmity to the Government" (letter (? February 1834): University College, Brougham MSS).

23. Some typical examples: "he thought the abolition of the corn laws ought to be speedy, but in the present state of things not immediate . . . . he thought the present duration of Parliaments too long, but could not exactly say at present, as he had not made up his mind on the question, what term should be substituted. The pension list was the work of the Tories, and they alone were to blame for the recklessness and unjust manner in which the public money has been thus squandered, but he did not think it consistent with the good faith of the country now to alter that list, much as he disapproved of it" (Scotsman, 21st May 1834).

24. "He should not deal in promises, but refer to his past life . . . . he had sat in three Parliaments -- he had fought the battle of reform -- he had exerted himself to the utmost that their shackles should be struck off -- and he had seen the glorious struggle come to a successful termination" (ibid.). The radical R.W. Jameson retorted to such an appeal at the nomination: "are we to give our votes for a mere history of the Reform Bill?" (Scotsman, 30th May 1834).

25. Letter (23rd May 1834) to T.F. Kennedy in Letters, p.510.

26. Scotsman, 21st May 1834.

27. Ibid.

28. At the nomination Campbell called on the Non-Intrusionists to proceed with patience in agitating for further reforms, in the meanwhile letting the Veto Act show its worth (Scotsman, 30th May 1834). For the relief of all the Whigs at the passing of the Veto Act, because it seemed to solve the difficulty without recourse to political action, see Omond, Lord Advocates (Second Series), pp. 24-25.

29. Letter (18th May 1834) to Dalrymple: SRO, Stair MS GD 135/154.

30. Scotsman, 14th May 1834.

31. See handbill published by his committee in Edinburgh Miscellanea, Vol. IV, entry 132.

32. The Scotsman hinted that numbers of tradesmen were supporting the Whig on this basis, but the Scotsman's rumours were both obscure, and, for obvious reasons, somewhat suspect (4th and 7th June 1834).

33. See pamphlet The Edinburgh Election in Edinburgh Miscellanea, Vol. IV, entry 173.

34. Scotsman, 14th May 1834.

35. Scotsman, 24th May 1834.

36. Scotsman, 14th May 1834.

37. Citizen, 21st May 1834. There are four numbers of this periodical in the EPL. It reiterated this theme of independence many times, joining it to the argument for a local, preferably non-legal, M.P.

38. According to William Gibson-Craig "the Tories are lukewarm about Learmonth . . . heartily ashamed of him as their candidate" (letter (18th May 1834) to Dalrymple: SRO, Stair MS GD 135/154).

39. Edinburgh Advertiser, 3rd June 1834.

40. Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 106.

41. Letter (10th May 1834) to T.F. Kennedy in Letters, p. 505. The Scotsman had anticipated 1,300 for Aytoun (21st May 1834).

42. Scotsman, 31st May 1834; Edinburgh Courant, 29th May 1834.

43. See Scotsman, 4th June 1834, for election statistics.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.; Edinburgh Advertiser, 3rd June 1834. There was good reason for the radicals to speak of Abercromby's liberalization. He had taken a decidedly liberal view of the Irish question, desiring reduction of tithes and less astringent policies when the Coercion Bill of 1833 was passed; he had pleaded for a reduction of the Irish Church's temporalities; and he had voted for the reconsideration of the Septiennial Act (Scotsman, 9th November 1833).

46. Scotsman, 25th June 1834.

47. Edinburgh Advertiser, 17th June 1834.

48. For instance the size of the crowd was estimated at 15,000 by the Scotsman (21st November 1834) and 5,000 by the Edinburgh Advertiser (25th November 1834).

49. It is impossible to know which way the vote really went. The Scotsman predictably gave the Whigs the majority while the Tory Edinburgh Advertiser reported a slight majority for the radicals.

50. According to the Scotsman, the reaction of the Committee to the interview was that "although they [the Whigs] have expressed themselves friendly to civil establishments of religion, and do not agree with Dissenters on all the points brought before them, the sentiments which the candidates have expressed on many of the questions which Dissenters are interested, are highly satisfactory, and the Committee are unanimously of opinion, that whatever course Dissenters may resolve to adopt at a future election, they ought, on the present occasion to give their undivided support to" the Whigs (7th January 1835).

51. The Tories had made their decision on the 27th. For many details see the informal and amusing private journal of Lord Ramsay, who in later years was M.P. for East Lothian and Governor General of India. I owe most grateful thanks to Lady Broun Lindsay for her kind permission to read portions of

51. (cont'd)

her great-grandfather's journal.

52. See a memorandum in a bundle entitled 'Election Memoranda' in SRO, Buccleuch MS GD 224/582.

53. "I will not deny that several times during the canvass I felt rather sanguine: but tho' I hoped very strongly I never expected" (Journal, 16th January 1835).

54. Professor Wilson and other Tory leaders could not restrain Ramsay's florid rhetorical style in election meetings (for typical examples see Edinburgh Advertiser, 30th December 1834).

55. I have found no evidence to prove the possibility that the Edinburgh Tories probably endured Learmonth because it was worth making a show of opposition even if it took the unlikely form of Learmonth. On balance, to have a candidate at all was, perhaps, an advantage which outweighed the disadvantage of Learmonth's inadequacies. Few Conservatives were likely to be willing to undertake a well-nigh hopeless contest at considerable expense but I suspect Learmonth contributed generously from his coachmaking fortune in return for the honour of the candidacy. I have no evidence to support this idea but it is hard otherwise to explain the indulgence of the Tories towards Learmonth.

56. The Whigs based their campaign on resistance to the manner of the Tory ministry's formation and on the bleak prospects which

56 (cont'd)

a return to Tory rule promised. Apart from that their statements of principle and intent were of the usual Whiggish kind; bland generalities and appeals to past achievements. For details see Scotsman, 31st December 1834, and January 1835 passim.

57. See Scotsman, 7th and 10th January 1835, and Edinburgh Advertiser, 9th January 1835.

58. Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 106.

59. The new city treasurer, Adam Black, led the Council in halving city officials' salaries and in dispensing with the council chamber's gilded lamps and the daily ringing of the bells of St. Giles at one o'clock. "Those who cannot pay their debts have no right to be merry", was his dour philosophy (Nicolson, Black, p. 89). For details of the final settlement of the debt when Duncan McLaren had succeeded Black as treasurer, see Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, chapter V. The reduction of municipal expenses by the ruthless abolition of sinecures and ceremonial appurtenances was a common policy in the 1830s of reformed Town Councils filled with utilitarian radicals and vindictive Whigs. Cf. Exeter, where old plate and Tory functionaries were indiscriminately removed (R. Newton, Victorian Exeter, 1837-1914 (Leicester, 1968), pp. 36-43) and also Leicester (Patterson, Radical Leicester, pp. 216-217).

60. Jeffrey's bill met with cautious favour from the Established Church

60. (cont'd)

Presbytery and the S.S.C. (Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/20c, 24th April 1833; S.S.C. Sederunt Book No.2, 24th June 1833). The W.S, Merchant Company and a large public meeting of Dissenters opposed the bill (W.S. Sederunt Vol. 8, 24th June 1833; Merchant Company Minute Book No.11, 20th June 1833; Scotsman, 22nd June 1833).

61. For a somewhat biased view of these activities, see R. Deuchar, The History of the Edinburgh Ministers' Stipend Tax and its Relation to the Disruption (Edinburgh, 1864). The Scotsman of July and August 1833 has details of almost daily examples of protest.

62. Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/21, 23rd January 1834. Chalmers suffered a slight stroke after his long speech in defence of the establishment principle. See Hanna, Chalmers, Vol. III, pp. 433-435.

63. See Scotsman, 16th April 1834. For a full discussion of Chalmers' ideal parochial system and his running battle with the Town Council to implement it, see Hanna, Chalmers, Vol. III, p. 446 ff.

64. See Scotsman, 23rd and 30th April, 14th May and 25th June 1834.

65. This shift in attitude towards the annuity tax by Established Churchmen is reflected in the editorial opinion of the Edinburgh Observer, a Moderate newspaper. Firmly pro-establishment in 1833, it was also concerned to eliminate aspects of establishment which detracted from the Church's strength and virtue. Hence, to abolish the embarrassing anomaly of the annuity tax could only strengthen the church. But when the anti-annuity tax movement became the chief spearhead of the out-and-out voluntaries, the Observer turned cold and hostile (see for instance the Observer for late October and November 1834, especially 7th November 1834). By 1836, the Observer was on the point of admitting that the abolition of the annuity tax would lead directly to disestablishment. By this time, the hope for a compromise reform had all but disappeared.

66. For details see Edinburgh Advertiser, 7th November 1834, Edinburgh Observer, 7th November 1834, and Scotsman, 5th November 1834.

67. Scotsman, 15th November 1834.

68. Free trade was the subject of various meetings in 1833 and 1834 (for examples see reports in Scotsman, 23rd November 1833 and 15th March 1834, and Chamber of Commerce Minute Book No.4, 28th January 1834). After colonial slavery was abolished a variety of similar humanitarian causes appear to have stirred the middle class conscience: the plight of the Polish people and Jewish civil

68. (cont'd)

disabilities, for instance, occasioned protest meetings (for examples, see reports in Scotsman, 7th September 1833 and 5th April 1834).

69. Letter (14th November 1832) to Brougham: University College, Brougham MSS.

70. Letter (13th May 1834): SRO, Stair MS GD 135/111. His son William agreed that the constituency was "split into sections upon all sorts of local topics, chiefly church matters, upon which they are most virulent and unreasonable" (letter (18th May 1834) to Dalrymple: SRO, Stair MS GD 135/154).

71. An anonymous pamphlet, published during the election of 1834, Letter to the Right Honourable James Abercromby, M.P., on the Ecclesiastical Affairs of Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1834), warned that Learmonth was attracting many Established Church Whigs and Aytoun many Whig voluntaries.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Growth of Sectarian Politics: 1835-1841

This chapter continues the analysis, begun in the previous chapter, of the gradual disintegration of the Whig party's electoral base. The Dissenters grew more alienated from the Whig party, while the Non-Intrusionists simultaneously acted as an independent political force in opposition to the Whigs. The political situation was complicated, however, by the continuing mutual hostility of Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists. There was no alliance between the two dissident sectarian groups who had in the recent past devoted so much energy to opposing each other over church extension and the establishment principle. To a degree the Whigs survived the challenge of these two groups by letting them play off each other. These developments culminated in the municipal election of 1840 and Parliamentary election of 1841. The new religious parties did not achieve the victories they sought, but the long-term effect of these events was to throw Edinburgh politics into a confusion of secular and sectarian parties which seriously threatened the survival of Whig hegemony in the constituency.[1]

The beginnings of independent Dissenter political activities were stimulated by further frustrations after 1835. The Edinburgh Dissenters had organized the Scottish Central Board of Dissenters in 1834, and, until it dwindled down into obscurity in 1839, this body, led first by Duncan McLaren, staunchly defended Dissenter prin-

ciples against the church extension movement within the Established Church and maintained steady pressure on the Whig government lest it bow to a greater pressure from Chalmers and his friends.[2] Although successful in forestalling church extension, the Board failed to move the Whigs any closer to voluntaryism or find a way out of the annuity tax impasse. In 1836, amid much civic excitement, many Dissenters, led by Town Councillor Thomas Russell, went to Calton Gaol rather than pay the tax, but the Town Council was too divided into extreme Churchmen and Dissenters to come to any new conclusions.[3] The Rev. Dr. John Brown's imprisonment in 1838 caused a similar stir. In October of 1837 the Edinburgh Annuity Tax Abolition Society was formed by radical Dissenters "to use all legal and constitutional means to effect the immediate, entire, and unconditional abolition of the Edinburgh Annuity tax".[4] Threats of mass civil disobedience made at the meeting came to nothing.

In the spring and summer of 1840 there was another resurgence of interest in the tax when the Town Council stirred itself sufficiently to send a bill to Parliament which would have reduced the tax by a little, by fixing ministers' stipends at £550 and abolishing the College of Justice's exemption.[5] The Annuity Tax Abolition Society would not approve any bill which did not include total abolition,[6] while the Established Church Presbytery, although it approved of the termination of the legal exemption, would not support the bill because it set a precedent of reducing the tax arbitrarily

without sufficient regard for the security of the ministers' salaries.[7] With the legal bodies opposing the bill and sending agents to London to oppose it,[8] with the First and Second districts holding protest meetings and the Abolition Society also sending an agent to London to lobby against the bill,[9] the government allowed it to lapse when the Parliamentary session ended. The Town Council, its fingers burnt badly by this moderate bill, sadly paid the expenses of the abortive legislation,[10] and temporarily abandoned the search for a satisfactory solution.

Many years had passed since 1832, many Whig politicians had promised relief, many Whig governments had let municipal interest groups kill annuity tax bills for them and still the tax survived as galling evidence of the Dissenters' weakness and the Whigs' timidity. The blame for the continued existence of the tax could not in fairness be laid entirely upon the Whigs but they were a convenient focus for the Dissenters' hostility. Evidence of how sharp that focus was becoming appeared in the pages of the Voluntary Church Magazine which characterized the Dissenters' traditional loyalty to the Whigs as "a grievous error".[11] The solution to the years of frustration lay in forging on alone where Whigs feared to tread. "Let this paltering with Whiggery have an end. Let the radicals choose their own ground and fight their own battle".[12] To put up radical voluntaries at elections would force the Whigs to show their true colours -- make them go forward with the voluntaries or fall back into the arms of the Established

Churchmen. In the by-election of 1839, the Edinburgh Dissenters made the first serious attempt to challenge the Whigs from within the Whig party and although this attempt failed, it was the beginning of a challenge to the Whig party which grew in the succeeding years.

The Parliamentary election of Queen Victoria's accession in 1837 had passed quietly in Edinburgh with the Whig-radical alliance of 1834-1835 still operative, discouraging Conservative opposition and resulting in the uncontested return of Abercromby and Campbell. James Abercromby, discontented since 1835 with his continued relegation to the Speakership by Viscount Melbourne, accepted a peerage in 1839 and retired from the House of Commons as Baron Dunfermline.[13] Since 1838 when T.B. Macaulay had returned from India (where he had sat on the Supreme Council) the Whigs had been on the lookout for a seat for their great champion.[14] And Edinburgh, it was clear, was just the right kind of constituency for such a politician. As Macaulay himself said when Adam Black invited him to contest the seat:

> if, however, I could be seated in the House of Commons as the representative of your noble city, I should be in the very situation which, of all situations, would be most agreeable to my feelings. I should be able to take part in politics, as an independent member of Parliament, with the weight and authority which belongs to a man who speaks in the name of a great and intelligent body of constituents. I should, during half the year, be at leisure for other pursuits to which I am more inclined and for which I am perhaps better fitted; and I should be able to complete an extensive literary work which I have long meditated. 15

All the Edinburgh Whig leaders seem to have been in agreement over the desirability of Macaulay's candidacy, although old Sir James Gibson-Craig, displaying his often canny foresight, predicted that Macaulay's high tone and purpose and time-consuming literary pursuits might cause difficulties later.[16] But even Sir James was caught by surprise when, during a meeting on 23rd May of the normally docile Liberal Aggregate Committee, convened to endorse Macaulay's candidature, Duncan McLaren created a furore by rising to ask the Committee to call a general meeting of the city's Whig electors to decide on a successor to Abercromby. Sir James Gibson-Craig reported that

> Mr. Duncan McLaren, who moved this became ashamed of it, and wanted to have it negatived without a Division -- but Tait . . . and his radical friends would not allow him. They spoke very highly, all of them, of Mr. Macaulay, but wanted a choice. [17]

Macaulay's candidacy was eventually approved by the Committee but the effect of McLaren's action was profound.

If one incident marked the beginning of that momentous split between McLaren's Dissenter-radical groups and the Whigs, this unprecedented challenge from within the Liberal Aggregate Committee to the Whig clique's control of candidate selection was that event. It destroyed forever McLaren's previously close relationship with the Whig leaders and the latter quickly leapt to the conclusion that McLaren's behaviour was prompted by personal vanity and ambition.[18] A rumour spread within days that McLaren himself actually had designs upon the vacant seat and that if

successful the Edinburgh voluntaries were prepared to give him £500 a year.[19] Although there is no extant evidence for this rumour it has a kind of symbolic significance. It was apparently thought quite possible that the Dissenters would have advanced that far towards political independence and that possibility alone is an index of how far the Dissenters had come since their enthrallment of 1832-1835. This time their independence did not materialize fully: McLaren only went so far as challenging the Whigs' method of candidate selection. It was a shrewd enough attack since it concentrated on a potentially very unpopular practice of the Whigs which antagonized all kinds of citizens, not just Dissenters. If the attack had proven successful, a meeting of all Whig electors would have been subject to greater Dissenter pressure and the Whig lawyers would have been diluted in a sea of middle class merchants and craftsmen. The Liberal Aggregate Committee, was, of course, too obedient an instrument to create such an opportunity for Whig upsets and McLaren's initiative was quickly suppressed. Nonetheless, the Dissenter flag of independence had begun to inch its way up the political pole.

If the attack was shrewd in principle, in practice its effectiveness was severely hindered by the clique's choice, Thomas Babington Macaulay. As Sir James Gibson-Craig noted in the passage quoted above, all the Dissenters spoke very highly of Mr. Macaulay. If the choice was such a popular one, the method of choosing could not appear so reprehensible. Even most of

the Tories, it was clear, were charmed into neutrality or support of Macaulay. Troubled in 1835-1836 by a debilitating rivalry over Tory leadership in the city,[20] the Conservative cause in Edinburgh in 1837 was deemed by the Duke of Buccleuch's political agent to be "hopeless".[21] A projected visit by Sir Robert Peel in late 1836 had been abandoned in fear that Edinburgh's reception of the great leader would be embarrassingly paltry in comparison to Glasgow's, where Peel was being triumphantly installed as rector of the University.[22] Conservatives had no more confidence in themselves by 1839, and Macaulay's candidacy divided them further. According to the Whig, Sheriff Gordon of Edinburgh,

> the most violent of the Tories insisted that a Candidate should be nominated though they admitted the hopelessness of the attempt, but their extravagance was checked by an intimation -- which I know was given -- that in the event of Learmonth or the like being set up against such a man as Macaulay, a great many of the most conspicuous Tories in the city were determined -- not to be neutral -- but to vote for the Whig. [23]

Formal expression of such Tory sympathy toward the great Whig was given in an editorial of the Edinburgh Advertiser which praised Macaulay as a writer, orator, and person, while deploring his liberal policies.[24]

These policies became clear in the traditional large public meeting in the Assembly Rooms on 30th May, in which the candidate was officially introduced to the Whig electorate. In forthright style, Macaulay explained his views in favour of the ballot,

free trade, cinquennial Parliaments and the £10 franchise in the country as well as in the burghs; he would not extend the franchise further. He made the usual plea for support of the faltering Melbourne ministry: "better to have unreformed laws administered in a reforming spirit, than reformed laws administered in a spirit hostile to all reform."[25] And then as a conclusion he launched into a sweeping peroration. Recalling all the past glories of the great Whig tradition -- even to the successful opposition to Elizabeth I's monopolies -- he went on to pledge his faith and loyalty to its principles:

> the good old cause, as Sydney called it on the scaffold, may be vanquished or victorious -- insulted or boldly triumphant -- the good old cause is still the good old cause with me -- (great cheering). 26

On 20th, May, William Gibson-Craig had tried to placate his father's qualms about Macaulay's candidacy by writing: "if Macaulay could only be started you may depend on it, his first meeting would silence all opposition".[27] Silence all opposition it almost completely did, while eliciting a chorus of approbation more ecstatic than anyone had predicted. It was in every way a party and a personal triumph. The Edinburgh Observer reported that "the triumph of the orator was complete; opposition was hushed".[28] In this way, the liberal Whig Observer announced its support for Macaulay. Sir James Gibson-Craig (who had been moved to tears by the speech[29]) gleefully reported that:

> he spellbound the meeting . . . . Both Rads and Chartists are terribly humbled, and will not soon recover the blow their own conduct and this day's proceedings have given them. 30

And Sheriff Gordon agreed:

> it caught the more sensible section of the Rads . . . . R.W. Jameson gave in his adhesion even before the meeting -- and Tait acknowledged that Macaulay was quite enough for him under existing circumstances. 31

And from London, William Gibson-Craig reported that "Macaulay's speech is producing as great a sensation here as it must have done in Edinburgh".[32] Many Whigs were suggesting that it be printed and distributed nationally.

The rest of the election was not quite as smoothly negotiated as the Whigs predicted in the afterglow of Macaulay's great speech. Indeed, only one day later in a meeting in the First district, Councillor Russell brought up the divisive issue of religion.[33] Macaulay admitted to some ignorance on local ecclesiastical issues but promised that he would react to every issue with impartiality, supporting endowment schemes only if a clear need and a popular demand were unmistakeably present. After a Chartist had forced Macaulay to admit that he was actually in favour of gradual rather than immediate abolition of the Corn Laws, Adam Black briefly defended the Aggregate Committee against charges of too much power. McLaren came to his feet at this and continued his accusations against the hasty and arbitrary action of the Committee in bringing Macaulay forward, and then he went on to express his

displeasure at the lack of local links which the city members had with their constituency. He hastened to admit that he was in favour of Macaulay's principles, but sturdily maintained that Edinburgh needed a representative familiar with its peculiar and critical problems. With these remarks, McLaren widened the range of his criticism from the method of selection to the kind of candidate selected. At this time, however, McLaren did not press the attack too closely, and the meeting ended amicably enough with a unanimous vote in favour of Macaulay's candidacy.

Macaulay's hustings speeches on the occasion of his uncontested election were seriously disrupted by Chartist interruptions, but apparenly this did not spoil the impression of total victory in which most Whigs revelled. The Whig clique had absorbed initial discontent with its highhanded methods and emerged from the election reassured and self-confident. Sheriff Gordon wrote that the complete victory "went a vast way to concentrate, harmonize, re-enliven, and invigorate the genuine Whigs party".[34] Macaulay had restored to the party that sense of purpose which had dwindled since 1832. McLaren had been persuaded to join the Whigs on the hustings platform and thus had returned to a temporary reconciliation with the Whig clique; and John Wigham, a Quaker silk merchant, who was shortly to become a prominent Anti-Corn Law Leaguer opposed to Macaulay, seconded Macaulay's nomination. Such were the dimensions of the Whig triumph.

In this accomplishment, the Whigs had, of course, been immeasurably aided by Macaulay himself, whose apparent integrity

and sense of high purpose combined with consummate ability as an orator made him a potent candidate. The hypnotic oratory had for the moment diverted attention from the dangerous religious issues and overwhelmed the dangerous jealousy of the middle class radicals. But an old campaigner, Lord Cockburn, foresaw more trouble after the jubilant election had passed: "the modest Duncan McLaren says, with a resigned indignation, 'this bolus will be swallowed, but don't try it again.' He will be your next candidate".[35]

Indeed the happy atmosphere waned rather quickly. The Whig cabinet, talent-starved and feeble, needed ministers of Macaulay's enthusiasm and ability and Lord Melbourne swiftly appointed Macaulay his Secretary at War, thus necessitating Macaulay's re-election. His election address to the newspapers was dated ostentatiously from Windsor Castle and Sir James Gibson-Craig reported how badly this had impressed the city:

> there is a self-conceit and vanity running through it, which I was not prepared for . . . . you may be assured, that the address will do him great harm. Many laugh at his vanity and self-importance. Many take up the matter more seriously. 36

> I thought him impregnable here, but he has damaged himself so greatly by his vanity and absurd folly, that I do not know what <u>may</u> happen. 37

By the time of the election in January 1840, indignation had diminished, and Gibson-Craig's fears were not realized: no opposition and no crowds hindered Macaulay's second electoral triumph. McLaren

was in the Assembly Rooms on 21st January with the Whig clique when Macaulay appealed for moderation in religious controversies, especially in regard to Ireland where nothing could be accomplished by oppression.[38] At a dinner of five hundred supporters in the Waterloo Rooms after Macaulay's brief hustings ceremony, McLaren toasted free trade; and Macaulay, sensing perhaps the nemesis which was to be his undoing, appealed for Whig unity in order to defy both Tories and Chartists:

> I trust you will see that no jealousy of any sort shall effect the smallest division in your ranks, which, while you stand firmly shoulder to shoulder, may defy any opposition. [39]

But in the following summer the appeal for separate political action was issued once again when the Dissenters became more impatient than ever with the Whigs. The United Secession Magazine of June 1840 decided that "a crisis has arrived".[40] The time had come for forcing the government's hand at last: "every candidate, be his party what it may, ought to be rejected who will not distinctly pledge himself to resist all farther concessions to the church". The government had recently excluded Dissenters from the Bible Board (set up to revise the text of the Bible) and from being prison chaplains. Dissenter Presbyteries submitted protests to Parliament[41] and prominent Dissenters warned their brethren that the government was now definitely falling under the sway of the Established Churchmen, and the Non-Intrusionists in particular. The Evangelicals, after gaining these small con-

cessions, would, with whetted appetites, proceed to demand and receive more and more from the wavering Whigs. As Rev. Marshall of Kirkintilloch observed: "the object of the Non-Intrusionists is to bring the whole country under their sway".[42] Andrew Rutherfurd, the newly appointed Lord Advocate, and Fox Maule were, the Dissenters feared, pushing the government towards the recognition and fulfillment of Non-Intrusionist aims which were, of course, ultimately directed towards a revivified and independent Established Church. These fears were, in fact, unwarranted, since the Whigs in question were actually struggling to maintain the usual evenhanded policy of Whig governments to both sides in Scottish sectarian controversies.

The sad fact for the Whigs was, that, in the increasingly hostile atmosphere of the late 1830s, their policy of neutrality had lost its aspect of evenhandedness as far as the hypercritical Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists were concerned. Each side only saw the gestures the Whigs made to the other side and darkly suspected evil coalitions of which I have found no evidence. Thus, finally, did the Whigs' neutrality in religious matters reveal itself to be self-defeating: it won few friends, many enemies. The Non-Intrusionists were now approaching the level of frustration at which the Dissenters had been operating for several years. By 1840 it was clear that even if the Whigs had a solution to the patronage dilemma in mind (which seemed very doubtful) they did not have the political energy to impose it upon Parliament

and the Established Church. But if Melbourne's faltering government held out little hope for Non-Intrusionists, neither did the Tories pose as the champions of non-intrusionism: the Moderate proclivities of Peel and his Scottish adviser, John Hope, were already only too evident. In this situation Non-Intrusionists were ready to opt for what many Dissenters had already decided was the only alternative left open to them -- independent political action.

Various local pressures contributed to spur Edinburgh's Non-Intrusionists on to this decision, although they were not alone in their degree of increasing independence. One of these local circumstances was the arrival of the Witness on the Edinburgh scene in January 1840. It immediately swelled the strident chorus of militant Non-Intrusionists advocating independent political action, especially in terms of Edinburgh's particular conflicts. Another local circumstance was the political leadership of the Edinburgh Non-Intrusionists by the ambitious and bellicose Lord Provost, James Forrest. In January 1840, Sheriff Gordon warned Rutherfurd of the possible consequences of a re-organization of the Liberal Aggregate Committee then underway which had been arranged "not very judiciously -- I fear, not very fairly".[43] Forrest had championed the candidacies of Robert Hunter and Robert Thomson over those of two party regulars, Messrs. Logan and Crook, for the posts of joint secretaries. Forrest's Non-Intrusionist candidates were defeated by a large majority and

Gordon hinted that the effect would be unfortunate -- Forrest and his Non-Intrusionists were feeling isolated in the Whig party. This feeling was strengthened when it became obvious that the Whigs intended to put forward as their candidate for Lord Provost in the forthcoming municipal election, the famous Dissenter, Adam Black, the antagonist of Chalmers and cohort of McLaren in the battle against church extension and the Evangelicals.

A most ironic situation was developing here. As mentioned above, the Dissenters were deeply suspicious of the Whigs falling under the sway of the Evangelicals; simultaneously the Non-Intrusionists were becoming just as deeply worried that the Whigs were giving way to Dissenter pressure. The Whigs were pleasing no one in particular, and the sectarian dissidents were gaining strength due to mutually antagonistic misconceptions. The fact that the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists looked upon the worst sin of the Whigs as the Whigs' capitulation to their opposite sectarian number was of the utmost significance; it suggested that the Whigs might weather the storm since the two dissident groups were so hostile to each other as to cancel each other out, leaving the Whigs in possession of some safe middle ground. The municipal election of 1840 and its aftermath soon exposed this curious development: two sectarian groups, discontented with the official Whig party, undertook independent political action, but were in such basic disagreement with each other that the Whig party survived the challenge more or less intact.

In the calm before the storm, old Sir James Gibson-Craig confidently predicted "I have no doubt of Adam Black being Provost".[44] But great was the surprise of the Whigs when it became clear that the incumbent Lord Provost, Non-Intrusionist Sir James Forrest, intended to seek re-election. By the end of August, Gibson-Craig had to report to Maule: "the Provost has, for a considerable time, broken off from all the leaders of the Liberal party . . . . The Liberals almost to a man, wish Adam Black to be Provost".[45] The Lord Provost was actually out canvassing electors, a tactic which no previous candidate for the highest civic office had deigned to employ.[46]

Black was both a prominent Dissenter and a Whig and opposition to his candidacy was based on both these qualities; but initially chief opposition came from Non-Intrusionists, not only because they objected to a Dissenter occupying a position with so much control over Established Church appointments and policy, but also because many of the incumbent and aspiring Town Councillors upon whom Black depended were Moderate Whigs. While the Witness tended to articulate the former, more general objection,[47] one finds evidence of the latter, more specific complaint in the private correspondence of Whig Non-Intrusionists.[48] Black tried to counter the general 'Church in danger' fears with protestations of neutrality. At a meeting of the Second district in early October, he claimed neutrality in the patronage issue and promised that he would exercise his power to appoint city clergy and to

decide on church policy with the same scrupulous regard for the individual congregations' feelings and the feeling of the Church as he had shown as a councillor.[49] Black's voting record may have been clean, rejoined the Witness, but his voluntary supporters were not so scrupulous.[50] In the end, Established Church Town Councillors, both Intrusionist and Non-Intrusionist, were to join together to defeat Black's bid to become Lord Provost on this common ground.

During the hectic period preceding the election, however, there was much obscure bargaining, all eventually futile, between Black's and Forrest's supporters over the issue of Black's Intrusionist supporters. To a degree, the Non-Intrusionist fury against Black was based more on the growth of Intrusionist representation on the Town Council than the success of one Dissenter politician.[51] Once, however, the election results had resolved the conflict over Intrusionist versus Non-Intrusionist representatives on the Town Council, the two Established Church groups united to deprive Black of the Lord Provostship. Intrusionist and Non-Intrusionist Churchmen joined to give Forrest seventeen votes to Black's fourteen votes in the first meeting of the new Town Council.[52]

The election posed a delicate dilemma for the Whig leaders, one which had been forming for several years: whom in a clear-cut contest between Non-Intrusionist and Dissenter champions they would support. For a while this dilemma threatened the unity of

the Whig party. Sir James Gibson-Craig, sympathetic to Black's defence of the voluntaries (it was 'forced upon him' by the exclusionist arguments of Forrest[53]), was mistrusted by Rutherfurd who feared the Whig party would become the instrument of the voluntaries.[54] If the Whigs had cast their full support behind a voluntary there might well have been disastrous repercussions for Whiggery among Established Churchmen all over Scotland and possibly England too. Yet to make any overt gesture of support for Forrest and the Non-Intrusionists would antagonize voluntaries everywhere. Eventually the Whigs agreed that the best policy was to continue tacit support for Black without attacking Forrest directly, banking, no doubt, on the shrewd assumption that the Non-Intrusionists and Dissenters were so concerned with attacking each other that they both might ignore the Whigs. After waiting out the election, the Whig party might pick up the pieces and reconstruct an acceptable image as the party which could best resolve the differences between the two groups. The Whigs' task of weathering the storm was made immeasurably easier, of course, by Adam Black who remained a remarkably calm eye in th e midst of the hurrican of sectarian vituperation. He avoided the harsh rhetoric of his fellow Dissenters and posed more as a potential conciliator of the two sects than as a champion of the Dissenters, a kind of role-playing which some Dissenters found craven.

The actual voting resulted in a fairly predictable split. The

Old Town districts displayed their traditional voluntaryism by voting solidly for Black while in the New Town districts an alliance of Non-Intrusionist Whigs and Conservatives prevailed over pro-Black candidates. The electorate had once again demonstrated its attraction to extreme opposites. There was no impression of clear-cut victory. Forrest had lost much popularity in winning: many considered his victory salutary, but his personal part in it degrading. For instance Fox Maule writing to Rutherfurd said that if the Dissenters

> may be induced to moderate their present view, I will say nothing of all that fills my heart and join in any condemnation you like of Forrest for I blame his illiberal speeches as much as any man. He is quite done for and can never hold up his head again. 55

But even more indicative of the shallowness of Forrest's victory was the fact that the total Non-Intrusionist membership in the Town Council was still only five. Forrest's majority consisted mainly of Whigs and Tories opposed to voluntaryism.

Neither the Dissenters nor the Non-Intrusionists had really achieved a takeover of the Whig party or a significant accession in political power or influence. The Whigs had managed to maintain a fragile unity, although their official candidate had suffered a rather humiliating defeat. The election had provided an unusual opportunity for the Conservatives to assert themselves, and Forrest's victory owed much to Tory vindictiveness towards the Whig, half disguised as it was by the plausible alibi of protecting the Church

against voluntary attacks.[56] Taken altogether, the election's greatest significance lay in the re-alignment of Edinburgh politics, not into a new set pattern, but rather into a new fluidity, with sectarian issues and party loyalties blending and conflicting in ever more complicated fashion. This confusion lasted throughout the period covered by this thesis.

The anger of the Dissenters in the aftermath of the election was intense, except for the group of moderate Whig Dissenters led by Black who endeavoured to cool Dissenter hostility and effect a reconciliation of Dissenters and moderate Whig Non-Intrusionists who had been embarrassed by Forrest's extremism. Duncan McLaren led the Dissenter resistance to Black's conciliatory attitude. In a letter to the Scotsman just before the election, he had called

> the attention of the Non-Intrusion Whig party to the fact that they are doing everything in their power to compel the Dissenters, in self-defence, to exercise the power which they possess of utterly extinguishing them as a political party or section, by throwing all their friends out of Parliament at the first general election; it being perfectly notorious that not one of them can be returned except by the votes of the Dissenters. [57]

After the election, in mid-December, there was a most important meeting of Dissenters in the South College Street Relief Church. Resolutions were passed deploring patronage and intrusion, but a 'plague on both your houses' attitude prevailed: the Non-Intrusionists were claimed to be as dangerous an enemy as the Intrusionists because their ultimate goal was the strengthening of

the Established Church. Dissenters were urged to exercise a highly critical attitude towards the Whigs. Then the meeting unanimously passed a portentous resolution, proposed by Thomas Russell, which set up a committee under the convenorship of McLaren, "to watch over the interests of Dissenters in this city in the event of a Parliamentary election".[58] McLaren was prepared to lead the Dissenters onwards towards an independent political party and this tactic was enthusiastically endorsed by such Dissenters as Dr. John Brown who wrote: "whether, then, the present circumstances or the future prospects of the Dissenters be considered, SEPARATE ORGANIZATION seems equally their duty and their interest".[59] While Black tried to restore the ties between the Whigs and Dissenters, McLaren was intent on revenging the Non-Intrusionist victory of 1840 and was prepared to wage this vendetta outwith the Whig party, whose links with the Non-Intrusionists were too strong to make it a satisfactory Dissenter instrument.

From late 1840 an interesting exchange of pamphlets ensued between Dr. Candlish of the Non-Intrusionists and the Dissenter minister, Hugh Heugh of Regent Place Church, Glasgow. Candlish's first pamphlet was a mild-mannered appeal to Dissenters for support in a cause that ought to arouse sympathy among Dissenters -- spiritual independence from the state. Although Candlish admitted the impossibility of Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists resolving disagreement over the doctrine of establishment, they could

at least join together for the less ambitious goal of reforming patronage.[60] Heugh's reply was just as gentlemanly, but firmly rejected the appeal for aid; unless the Non-Intrusionists were prepared to embrace voluntaryism it would be dishonest for Dissenters to be more than neutral observers of the patronage dispute.[61] In Candlish's reply, the political significance of this exchange came into sharper focus; Candlish intimated that Non-Intrusionists accepted Heugh's pamphlet as an undertaking that Dissenters would not oppose Non-Intrusionist candidates in the forthcoming Parliamentary election.[62] Heugh's reply to this was carefully non-commital, emphasizing again what Dissenters felt to be the inconsistencies of the Non-Intrusionist demands for state endowment without state supervision and exhorting Non-Intrusionists to cut the state connection altogether in order to obtain true freedom and purity.[63]

It would appear that Candlish had written these pamphlets to mollify Dissenter rage against Forrest, hoping that a quiet restatement of the principles which the two groups held in common, coupled with an appeal for help on these grounds, might actually result in a political alliance of the more moderate elements in both groups. It is difficult to assess the immediate results of this exchange; there is at least no evidence that Duncan McLaren was affected by them. Their long-term significance is more easily appreciated. The pamphlets make painfully clear the wide ideological gulf that separated Non-Intrusionists and Dissenters

over the fundamental principle of establishment. Even if the hostility, left over from past conflicts, which lurks between the lines of these pamphlets, was eventually eliminated, the stark disagreement over doctrine could not easily be resolved. This basic conflict would remain the greatest single bar to cooperation of these two sects, both in 1841 and the rest of the period here considered.

It is not clear how deeply Candlish feared outright Dissenter opposition after Edinburgh's municipal election of 1840. It is impossible to know, for instance, if he was aware of how determined McLaren was to carry his opposition to Non-Intrusionism to extreme lengths. As Candlish and Heugh cautiously sparred, McLaren was writing that

> the progress of the nonintrusion party is fraught with many evils and is dangerous to the cause of civil and religious liberty in particular. I will therefore do every thing in my power to avert these evils by checkmating the party at every turn they take to promote their cause. 64

This quotation comes from a letter written to Sir James Gibson-Craig, and demonstrates that McLaren was prepared to work with the old Whigs to defeat the Non-Intrusionists. Indeed, McLaren's determination was so intense that in January 1841 he actually approached John Hope through a third party with an extraordinary proposition -- the combination of Tories and Dissenters to defeat Non-Intrusionists in the approaching general election. There is little evidence that this was taken very seriously by the Conser-

vatives.[65] If Candlish was even only dimly aware of how far McLaren's anti-Non-Intrusionist rage was taking him, he had good reason to offer the olive branch.

In any case, as will shortly be shown, the Dissenters entered into a tentative alliance with the Whigs in the spring of 1841 and at the general election split into a faction under Black who remained loyal to the Whigs and a faction under McLaren who renewed the appeal for Dissenter independence. Before considering those developments, it should be shown how McLaren's Dissenters gained allies in middle class radicals such as James Aytoun. Ever since the mid 1830s Aytoun had been losing the leadership of Edinburgh's working class radicals. The Whig-radical reconciliation of 1834 (see Chapter Three above) had been strengthened by Daniel O'Connell's visit to Edinburgh in September 1835. O'Connell was in the mellow pro-Whig mood set by the Lichfield House Compact and Aytoun for the middle class radicals spoke in as mellow a tone of the basically liberal qualities of Lord Melbourne's government.[66] As the middle class radicals remained pro-Whig in the next year, working class radicals began to form their own crypto-Chartist organizations from late 1836. By the election of 1837 so wide was the split that while Aytoun and R.W. Jameson served as the croupier and steward at the official celebration of the Whigs' uncontested victory, working class radicals met on Calton Hill to denounce the Whigs for their opposition to household suffrage and immediate introduction of the Ballot.[67]

The gap yawned when formal Chartism emerged in Edinburgh in 1838 under the leadership of John Fraser, Abram Duncan, and other previously unknown men.[68] The growth of Chartist churches and the practice of disrupting anti-corn law meetings[69] seems to have alienated a great deal of potential middle class support, particularly among Dissenters. At meetings of the Dissenters, Chartist amendments were regularly defeated overwhelmingly.[70]

James Aytoun spurned Chartism for its exclusively working class prejudice; he toured many Scottish towns in 1839, vigorously denouncing Chartism as the greatest enemy of reform because of its tendency to split the beneficial alliance of working and middle classes.[71] The dissension between the Chartists and the middle class radicals was further demonstrated in the Parliamentary election of 1839. Fraser insisted over Aytoun's objections that the Chartists should bring a Chartist candidate forward, even when the man in question, Sharman Crauford, refused to accept the nomination.[72] At the hustings Fraser persisted in contesting the election of Macaulay when all the middle class radicals were enraptured by that great Whig's brilliance. Sheriff Gordon wrote that the Chartists

> were at the hustings in considerable numbers by 10 o'clock -- while Fraser, their leader and their ruin -- (for a lower, weaker, more ribald scoundrel never duped his fellow-beings) spoke against time in proposing Crauford, that the show of hands might be subsequent to 2 o'clock -- the workman's dinner hour. It utterly failed. 73

But clearly Aytoun had failed too: the growth of Chartism brought the end of middle class leadership of working class radicalism. Not even McLaren was to regain it completely in the 1860s.[74]

As Aytoun and other middle class radicals found themselves isolated from the Chartist working class, they tended to ally themselves with the Dissenters in their increasingly independent stance against the Whigs. It was a natural alliance, especially with McLaren as leader since his Dissent was both religious and secular. The effect of this growing alliance between the middle class radicals and Dissenters was soon apparent: the Dissenter organization became more outspoken in criticizing the Whigs' secular policies. The foundation of a Liberal party devoted to voluntaryism, secular reforms, and the overthrow of the legal clique of Whigs was being laid in 1841 as this important coalition between the middle class radicals and Dissenters took place. The strength of this emerging party was soon tested as the general election of 1841 drew near.

In the spring of 1841 McLaren was still willing to work with the Whigs, hoping perhaps that he could inveigle the Whig party into becoming a Dissenter instrument. At a meeting of 8th March the Dissenter committee formed in the previous December resolved to co-operate with the Liberal Aggregate Committee in registering electors "without regard to their opinions on any ecclesiastical question".[75] The Non-Intrusionist Whigs led by Forrest were, it was reported, continuing to flirt with the Tories.[76] Intimations

of a general election were coming quickly and the Whigs were anxious to re-forge old links with the Dissenters, and, as actually happened, neutralize the Dissenters while working behind their backs. The McLarenite Dissenters were willing to oblige the Whigs if the Whigs co-operated by selecting suitable candidates. A bargain might then be struck and both prospective parties to it were at this stage of uncommitted negotiation quite willing to co-operate.

Meanwhile, Sir John Campbell was trying to get himself to Ireland as Lord Chancellor. He had been trying since 1839 but the incumbent, Lord Plunket, created difficulties by refusing to resign. It was embarrassing to the Whigs as the transfer appeared to be a job, since the appointment, coming just before the general election, would ensure Campbell a life-long retirement pension if the Whigs lost the election. Plunket finally resigned and Campbell smoothed over the difficulty by taking up his position on the understanding that he would not accept the pension.[77] The Edinburgh Whigs had long been aware of Campbell's intentions and were casting about for a successor well before the public announcement of his departure.[78]

Ever since Fox Maule had been defeated in Perthshire in 1837, he had been a likely candidate for Edinburgh. Gibson-Craig had asked him in 1839[79] and Maule wrote back saying he was ready whenever Campbell might go.[80] He might have been able to unite the Non-Intrusionist Whigs with the Whig clique as

he was sincerely loyal to both groups. But when Rutherfurd asked him about it in November 1840, Maule said no:

> you may make your mind easy as to getting me to Edinburgh. The place is much too hot to hold me and Craig honestly informs me that independent of my strong non-intrusion principles, there are certain sins of omission which the Dissenters are resolved to visit on my particular head because they can fetch a blow at me. 81

These 'sins of omission' were his support of the Bible Boards, and the Whigs' highland schools scheme, which excluded Dissenters from teaching in these new schools. In more normal times these sins might have been less important, but coming on top of the municipal election they would ensure Dissenter opposition. So Maule did not stand in Edinburgh. The point had arrived when no Whig could count automatically upon hitherto dependable Dissenter support. And in Edinburgh at least, no Whig could anticipate victory at a general election if the Dissenters opposed his candidacy. This episode is another indication of the growing importance of the Dissenters' coolness towards the worried Whigs.

Meanwhile, the Dissenters' sub-committee with responsibility for elections (as yet unaware of Campbell's imminent departure) met on 10th May to deliberate on Dissenter policy in the approaching general election.[82] Although it postponed a final vote on the matter, it was evident that the Dissenters would ask the eminent English radical Joseph Hume to stand for Edinburgh, presumably leaving the Whigs to choose one of the two sitting M.P.s to continue the Whigs' representation. This prospect did not please

the Whigs, and Sir James Gibson-Craig went to work on Black to persuade him to oppose such a course emanating from the Dissenters' committee. They had a positive response from him,[83] but Gibson-Craig had to report that "if the Dissenters insist on Hume, I think the Liberals will go into it rather than be defeated, but I shall oppose it to the utmost".[84] Once again, the Whig clique acknowledged the power of the Dissenters, and the need to ensure that that power was not turned against them. It is interesting to reflect that if Hume had accepted the invitation to stand, Edinburgh's M.P.s might very well have been Hume and Macaulay -- a fascinating combination.

At another sub-committee meeting the candidature of Hume was formally recommended to be undertaken by the general committee. Writing to John Hill Burton, the liberal Whig advocate, Duncan McLaren referred contemptuously to Adam Black and his 'do-nothing policy' and then predicted:

> I don't think there should be any real difficulty in carrying any man whom the large Committee fix, <u>if they should</u> be nearly unanimous, which I trust may be the case. [85]

McLaren's 'trust' that the large committee would be unanimous was to be shattered. It is true that the majority of the general committee on 21st May agreed with McLaren that Hume was an excellent candidate for the Dissenters,[86] but indications were growing that not all Dissenters agreed with McLaren or approved

of his leadership. William Gibson-Craig had already written his father that "Duncan McLaren is so much distrusted and so unpopular that I am in great hopes he will find his power of doing mischief is not so great, as he flatters himself".[87] Now Adam Black came forward as the Whigs' hatchet man, using his Dissenter leadership to lead moderate Dissenters back into the Whig camp. In a letter to the Scotsman he agreed that an M.P. who spoke for Scottish Dissent would be highly desirable, but he claimed that Hume was, in spite of his parentage, an English-oriented radical, who could hardly qualify for that role: for this reason he would continue to support Campbell (who had not yet made his Irish exodus, although Black certainly must have known of its coming).[88] With this letter the Dissenters' Committee began to break up.

McLaren had not shut the door on the Whigs: the meeting of 21st May had recommended that the Dissenters negotiate with the Liberal Aggregate Committee on the subject of a public meeting of electors to debate the merits of Campbell and Hume. The Whigs responded positively[89] and a series of small meetings was held at the Cafe Royal and other places at the end of which McLaren and the Whigs agreed to the public meeting. But on 31st May, the Dissenters heard from Hume that he would be standing at Leeds, and they notified the Whigs that a public meeting was no longer necessary.[90] It would appear that the Dissenters were now content to return Campbell and Macaulay unopposed for

there were no more meetings of the Committee until Campbell's retirement was announced. Gibson-Craig definitely knew of the event's inevitability by 2nd June, but it was not announced publicly until 21st June.[91] "Keep Sir John Campbell's secret as long as possible",[92] cautioned crafty Gibson-Craig: this would give the Whigs time to find another candidate who was suitable. The Dissenters, of course, should be kept in the dark and treated with the utmost delicacy:

> we have had a most difficult game to play with the Dissenters. Hitherto we have played it successfully. We cannot be too cautious or conciliatory. Any want of caution or conciliation would, at once, sever us for ever. They may be led, but they cannot be driven. 93

Now Sir James began to badger his son William into running, but William was very reluctant. He had sat for Edinburgh County since 1837 but was abandoning it in 1841 to the Tories because the Tories' creation of faggot votes had been so effective that no Whig had a chance.[94] Two years before, William had written his father:

> in regard to any chance of my being brought forward for the city at next General Election that is entirely out of the question. You must not allow yourself <u>even</u> <u>to consider</u> <u>it</u> . . . . If ever at any future time I were to represent Edinburgh it must be when the people of themselves should come to prefer me to any other Candidate they could get. 95

He still held this resolution, but of course his father would not

hear of a popular requisition at this time. The great object was to have William all ready to step in 'instantly' upon the news of Campbell's resignation, thus leaving the Dissenters flat-footed.[96] But William would not agree quickly to such a procedure.

While William procrastinated, the Non-Intrusionists began to stir. Sir James Gibson-Craig reported that Forrest was doing nothing to quash the rumour that he might stand in the election,[97] while the Witness was making unpleasant noises.[98] Even worse, Dunlop reported to Rutherfurd that the Dissenters might be about to put McLaren forward.[99] By 11th June when the news that the Tories were offering T.C. Bruce, a son of the Earl of Elgin,[100] and James Forrest as their candidates seemed likely to break at any moment, Sir James was becoming seriously concerned: "unless something be done instantly, the city will be lost".[101] The pressure must really have been on William now; at last he relented. He explained his decision in a letter to Sir John Campbell.

> As it seems really impossible to find any other candidate who would be acceptable to the constituency, I have consented to come forward in your place. This appears to give satisfaction, and it is believed that there will be no opposition. It is the last place in Great Britain I should have wished to sit for; but resolutely as I had determined never to become a candidate while there was a chance of another Liberal being found, I never could have allowed from mere personal feelings so important a representation being lost to the party.[102]

William had balanced the loss of influence in presenting himself as a candidate with the possible loss of the seat if it were thrown open to the electors-at-large. In the end, he had to agree with his father that the best course open to the Whigs to maintain their control over city politics was to forego the dubious possibility of a spontaneous gesture of the electors for the surer tactic recommended by Sir James.

With William's reluctant change of mind, the news of Campbell's resignation could be released. The next day, the Liberal Aggregate Committee met and obediently voted a requisition in favour of Gibson-Craig.[103] The Dissenters were reported to be asking William Ewart of Liverpool to stand.[104] But he replied by 24th June that he was committed to Dumfries and would not stand in Edinburgh.[105] With this second disappointment most Dissenters were content to acknowledge failure and support Gibson-Craig and Macaulay. But McLaren was still fighting according to Sir James Gibson-Craig:

> we understood from him yesterday that, if Ewart declined, we should have no further trouble. Now that Ewart has declined, he says he is determined to find out some other person, and I think it will end in his bringing himself forward . . . . Black and many of the most influential Dissenters are very indignant at this, and there is a complete schism among them . . . . His [McLaren's] whole object is mischief, in which, to a certain extent, he will succeed, at the expense of his own character for consistency and plain dealing. 106

An example of the reaction against McLaren was the tone

taken by the Edinburgh Observer, a liberal Intrusionist journal that had sympathized with the Dissenters in the 1840 municipal election. It expressed satisfaction with Gibson-Craig[107] and claimed that at least half of the Dissenters were similarly inclined. The Dissenters' Committee, by opposing him, were not truly representative of the Dissenters and thus were assuming all the evil habits of the Whig clique that the Dissenters were so opposed to: "gentlemen who objected to what this aggregate committee, or committee of Conveners, had done on former occasions, acted, in the present instance, precisely in a similar manner".[108] A letter from 'A Dissenter' observed:

> it seems that the body, under the disguise of a committee for protecting the rights of Dissenters, has degenerated into a self- elected Radical junto . . . . They will damage the cause of Dissent. [109]

The 'radical junto' met on 25th June to consider what could be done at this late date, and at this meeting it became clear just how radical this ostensibly religious organization had become. First, Town Councillor Gray moved what the Whigs had expected all along, that McLaren should be nominated by the Committee, and this was carried unanimously. McLaren then declined this offer of support, alluding to his desire to attend to his business (if he did so as an M.P. he would be betraying his trust), and his personal dislike of the office: "he had no liking for the office, and was convinced that he could not fill it with any degree of

happiness to himself".[110] No doubt McLaren was aware of how hopeless his candidacy would have been with the Non-Intrusionists all opposed to him and the moderate Dissenters increasingly alienated. Next, the Committee passed a very forthright and aggressive resolution which left no doubts that whatever the origins of the Committee it had now embraced more liberal ideals than just voluntaryism. Here the influence of the middle class radicals, so lately estranged from the Chartist working class, could be faintly discerned.

> That, from the adverse circumstances in which the Committee are now placed, from having no Candidate to propose who would <u>certainly</u> accept if elected, and from the want of time to communicate with others who might be suggested, it is not expedient to propose any person in opposition to the present candidates; but this Committee are of opinion, that it will be the duty of the Dissenters to unite at the next election in favour of some independent Candidate, entertaining decidedly Liberal opinions on the great political questions of the day including the total abolition of all duties on Corn, and who will, in practice, prove himself a zealous defender of the civil rights of Dissenters, and be eligible in all other respects; and, when such a Candidate shall be fixed on, and agree to stand, that he should be brought to the poll, and every fair means used to secure his return on independent principles, without attempting to effect any compromise with other parties, -- should they be so unreasonable as to resist the wishes of the Dissenting portion of the Liberal electors. [111]

The temporary truce with the Whigs was hereby concluded and the foundations of the advanced Liberal party -- the McLarenites -- well laid. The tentative alliance with the Whigs had proved unsatisfactory; certainly the Whigs had taken advantage of the Dissenters, but the Dissenters themselves had been less than skilful

in their choice of candidates and their hesitant procedure. The McLarenite committee, alienated from many of their fellow-Dissenters and from the bulk of the electorate by their radical politics and defiant leadership, were only a potential threat to the Whigs.

But as the election moved into its final stages, it became evident that the Dissenter Committee was not the only discontented party. Macaulay and Gibson-Craig finally met the electors at a large meeting in the Waterloo Rooms on 26th June. After intimating his general support for the national policies of the Whigs, Macaulay embarked on the subject which probably interested his audience the most and him the least. Affirming support for Establishment, yet not wanting to encourage undue Church expansion, he plumped for the customary pragmatic attitude, time honoured, but shop worn, of his Whig predecessors in the city representation: "we must deal with the question as we find it".[112] On the patronage issue he came down on the side of the state and Court of Session, but could not give a decided opinion on what kind of Veto Act he would support. If it came to the ultimate crunch, the Established Church must bow to the state. The speech was punctuated by a considerable number of clamorous interruptions and Macaulay occasionally lost control of the audience.[113] Gibson-Craig's speech was an unremarkable effort in which he put forward a safe Whig platform: support for gradual reduction of corn laws, desire for abolition of church rates and rejection of suffrage extension 'at present'. The atmosphere of the meeting,

however, was charged with dissatisfaction and discontent; clearly Macaulay's first major confrontation with the religious forces of the city had been an unsuccessful one.

As a faithful Non-Intrusionist who, as an elder in the General Assembly, had voted for the Veto Act, Gibson-Craig was perfectly suitable to the Non-Intrusionists, especially when he affirmed in his speech that in matters spiritual, the Church must retain complete jurisdiction. But Macaulay had stirred deep wrath in the Non-Intrusionist bosom as the Witness revealed:

> he explained his views on the Church question in a manner that left no doubt on all who heard him, that he had either very little knowledge of the subject, or considered it of but secondary importance. 114

Some extreme Non-Intrusionists were so dissatisfied with Macaulay's performance that they were prepared to resurrect the alliance of November 1840 to prevent Macaulay's return. Later on the same day some seventy electors, mostly Whig, met and expressed the most violent discontent with Macaulay and decided to have talks with the Tories, with the idea of putting Non-Intrusionist Mr. T.C. Bruce forward. Alarmed by this serious development, the Whigs organized a small meeting of ninety Non-Intrusionists with Macaulay in which he agreed to support the principle of a Veto Act and to oppose bills enforcing intrusion. Mollified somewhat by this conciliatory gesture and discouraged by the cautious response of the Conservatives (who

were no doubt reluctant to become the tool of the Non-Intrusion party), the Non-Intrusionists dropped their opposition, and Macaulay and Gibson-Craig were elected on 1st July after Chartist opposition collapsed.

Together the elections of 1840 and 1841 were a watershed in Edinburgh politics in the sense that two parties which played great roles in future political developments were its direct results. These were of course the Non-Intrusionists -- soon to be Free Church -- party and the Dissenter party. These developments could only bode ill for the Whigs unless they absorbed one of the two new parties into their own. But as A. Murray Dunlop, the Non-Intrusionist advocate, wrote, the new religious parties bore no direct relation to old secular parties; the stresses of the religious issues could not be contained within the old secular political structures.

> With a large portion of the population, the interests of the Church, as involving the very best interests of the State, are the prominent objects to them in the exercise of their political franchises and influence; and no one can compare the present political position of Scotland, with that in which it stood seven years ago, without being fully convinced of the fact, that a large and influential portion of the people sit very loose indeed to mere party connexions compared with the strength of those ties which attach them to the cause of the Church. 115

It was clear to perceptive observers that this loosening of old party ties was of the utmost significance. John Hope, for example, wrote of the Dissenters' separate political committee set up in

December 1840, as "the most important thing, which has occurred in Scotland since the election of 1832".[116] Not much less important, of course, was the defection of the Non-Intrusionists. But the mutual enmity between these two religious groups, a product of old rivalry and continued theological disagreement, preserved the Whigs' power long after it might logically have been expected to decline. The distrust and hostility between the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists continued for many years; it was the solder of frustration with Macaulay that finally cemented the two dissident factions together in 1846-1847. And even then it was not a permanent coalition. This left the Whigs -- that is to say the non-religious Whigs or Whigs who subordinated their religious loyalties to their political sympathies -- still in control of Edinburgh politics. They were still a numerous and influential body and formed a solid wedge between the two religious parties who remained roughly equal in electoral numbers. As long as these two parties remained estranged the Whigs were assured of success.

For the moment, then, the Whigs were safe in port; but there was not much comfort in the passage, for the emergence of the religious crisis into politics gave the latter a new volatility and uncertainty. And after the election of 1841, the Witness continued to proclaim the poverty of Whiggery unallied with Non-Intrusionism,[117] while Non-Intrusionist political activities, not just in Edinburgh, but all over Scotland, were evidence that the Non-Intrusionist challenge was continuing to grow.[118] Although Black and some

moderate Dissenters had re-joined the Whigs, just a fortnight after the election, at a meeting of Dissenters, McLaren once again asserted their right to demand one sympathetic city member, who was no tool of the Whig ministers who, he said, were working for the Non-Intrusionists.[119] The meeting firmly reiterated the resolutions of 25th June and asked McLaren to keep his committee in readiness for the next election. For them, the struggle had only just begun.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

1. The discussion would be clarified if precise numerical figures could be given for the various sectarian and secular groups. But this is unfortunately impossible. There was no election in which the choice was so clear cut that one could use the figures as a basis for this kind of analysis. However, by 1840 onwards, it seems roughly accurate to place the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists on an equal footing of somewhere in excess of 1,000 electors each. The Whigs probably had the support of approximately 1,500 electors with the Conservatives trailing at about 800 voters. (See letter (2nd June 1852) from James Simpson to Melgund: NLS Minto MS 135.2, for corroborating estimation.) But who knows how rigidly these groups maintained their loyalties in individual elections? Especially complicating was the right of each voter to cast two votes in a general election. The second vote was notoriously difficult for politicians to accout for and contributed further to the uncertainty of politics in these years.

2. The Edinburgh Voluntary Church Association of 1832 was the parent organization, the first of its kind in Scotland (see Cairns, Brown, pp. 170-172; A.C. Dick, Substance of a Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Evangelical Dissenters of Different Denominations (Edinburgh, 1833), pp. 3-4; and Voluntary Church Association, Report of the Proceedings and Speeches at the Annual

2. (cont'd)

Public Meeting of the Voluntary Church Association (Edinburgh, 1835); see also Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 170 ff.) The idea caught on elsewhere in Scotland (see for instance, Report of the Speeches Delivered in Gordon St. Church, Glasgow, at the Formation of the Glasgow Voluntary Church Society (Glasgow, 1832). But by 1834, as the church extension campaign got underway, the need for a coordinated national body was fulfilled by the Scottish Central Board. The Board was dominated by Edinburgh Dissenters (James Peddie, W.S. was secretary, McLaren president) and almost half of its financial support came from Edinburgh. For these and other details see First Annual Report by the Scottish Central Board of Dissenters (Edinburgh, 1835) and Fourth Report of the Scottish Central Board of Dissenters (Edinburgh, 1838).

3. For details on Russell's well-organized civil disobedience, see Deuchar, History of Edinburgh Ministers' Stipend Tax, especially pp. 7-8; W. Norrie, The Annuity Tax (Earlston, 1912), pp. 103-111, and Russell, The Annuity Tax, a pamphlet defending voluntaryism which Russell composed in gaol.

4. Scotsman, 21st October 1837.

5. Scotsman, 21st March 1840.

6. Scotsman, 11th March 1840. A petition organized by the Society demanding total abolition from Parliament obtained 17,000

6. (cont'd)

signatures (Scotsman, 21st March 1840).

7. Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/22, 16th March 1840.

8. The Faculty of Advocates objected to the bill, ostensibly on the grounds that it would result in the tax becoming a burden on the poor since it did not stipulate an exemption for owners or occupiers with property valued at £10 or below (see Faculty of Advocates Reports, Vol. I, 15 and Vol. IV, 16). The Writers to the Signet opposed the bill outright, refusing to consider the abolition of its exemption; and the Deputy-Keeper, James Hope, travelled to London to oppose the bill in person (W.S. Sederunt Vol. 9 , 16th March, 5th May and 26th June 1840).

9. Scotsman, 16th May and 3rd June 1840.

10. Scotsman, 9th September 1840.

11. Voluntary Church Magazine, August 1838, p. 362.

12. Ibid., p. 364.

13. For somewhat conflicting views of the circumstances of Abercromby's retirement, see Lord J. Campbell, Life of John, Lord Campbell (edited by his daughter, Mrs. Hardcastle), 2 vols. (London, 1881), Vol. II, p. 312, and DNB, Vol. I, pp. 40-41.

14. Letter (n.d.) from William Gibson-Craig to Sir James Gibson-Craig; SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/12.

15. Letter (15th May 1839) to Adam Black: NLS MS 3650/43-44. According to Nicolson, it was originally Black's suggestion to bring in Macaulay: in the following years, Black was Macaulay's unofficial agent and 'confidant' in Edinburgh (Black, pp. 103-104).

16. While agreeing that Macaulay was an excellant choice, Sir James worried that "it may be dangerous to start him, partly as being little acquainted with common place matters, he would be an inefficient member" (letter (17th May 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628).

17. Letter (23rd May 1839) from J. Gibson-Craig to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

18. Cockburn wrote Rutherfurd "Mr. Duncan McLaren has behaved like a fool about Macaulay . . . . I fear he has been spoiled by praise, and that he is not to be an exception to the rule that, even in the humblest walk, the pipe clay of low training will break out, -- especially in the form of conceit" (letter (26th May 1839): NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.2.). Cockburn was referring to McLaren's recent triumph in settling the city's financial problems, for which praise and thanks had been unqualified; for a fulsome description of McLaren's triumph, see Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 112-113. It was assumed that all this had turned the ambitious Treasurer's head. Archibald Davidson, sheriff of Midlothian, wrote to W. Gibson-Craig: "Duncan McLaren is abominable. So comes it of being made too much of" (letter

18 (cont'd)

(5th July 1839): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10).

19. Letter (26th May 1839) from Sir J. Gibson-Craig to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.2. I have found no other references to this rumour of a voluntary fund to support McLaren's candidature.

20. The rivalry revolved around the issue of a 'General Conservative Association of Scotland', the Scottish counterpart of the many Conservative clubs being established throughout England (see Hill, Toryism and the People, pp. 44-45). The concept of the club, a registration and social centre for all Scottish Tories, was advanced by the Duke of Buccleuch, but opposed by John Hope, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, who apparently saw the club as a challenge to his influence with Peel and Aberdeen. (Details of this rather oriental intrigue can be found in a small bundle of letters and papers entitled "Edinburgh Conservative Club" in the SRO, Buccleuch MS GD 224/582; there is no trace of this controversy in the Peel or Aberdeen MSS.) Apparently Hope's coldness was influential enough to keep many Conservatives from joining the club and it died still-born in late 1836. There was a complicated background to the Hope-Buccleuch controversy, based on financial disagreements arising out of John Hope's brother's, James, activities as Tory election agent for Midlothian (for this, see a bundle of letters entitled "Midlothian election expenses, 1835-1837" in the SRO, Clerk MS GD 18/3374).

21. From an election memorandum in SRO, Buccleuch MS GD 224/582.

22. See letters from John Hope, Melville, Buccleuch, etc. of late November 1836 in BM, Peel MSS, Add. MS 40422. Ramsay, Forbes and Learmonth went to Tamworth to invite Peel, but they and Peel apparently went through the ritual for form's sake and Peel declined the offer, pleading press of business.

23. Letter (n.d.) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.5.

24. Edinburgh Advertiser, 31st May 1839.

25, Scotsman, 1st June 1839.

26. Ibid. The rich and sometimes over-rich rhetoric did not always please. One notes with interest the nice contrast that Lord Cockburn made when comparing Macaulay's style with that of his beloved Jeffrey: "I dined with him yesterday at Craigcrook. A vulgar looking fellow -- and a cumbrous talker; but pleasant and natural . . . . He's like a heavy strong Flanders draught horse, beside the light, fiery Arabianism of Jeffrey" (letter (31st May 1839) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.2.).

27. Letter (20th May 1839): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/14.

28. Edinburgh Observer, 31st May 1839.

29. Letter (5th June 1839) from Davidson to W. Gibson-Craig:

29. (cont'd)

SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

30. Letter (misdated 29th May 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

31. Letter (n.d.) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. Ms 85.1.5.

32. Letter (3rd June 1839) to J. Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

33. Scotsman, 1st June 1839.

34. Letter (n.d.) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. Ms 85.1.5.

35. Letter (31st May 1839) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.2.

36. Letter (5th October 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

37. Letter (7th October 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628. The habitually pessimistic Sir James gloomily predicted in the same letter that Macaulay would prove to "be as troublesome a member of Cabinet as Brougham was".

38. Scotsman, 22nd January 1840.

39. Ibid. The Aggregate Committee had already been at work repairing the division between them and McLaren. On 9th December 1839 the Committee had resolved to ask the district

39. (cont'd)

committees' opinions on whether they approved of McLaren's plan to have a general meeting whenever the city representation became vacant (Scotsman, 11th December 1839). McLaren's suggestion was lost somewhere in the district committee; it became a major issue between McLaren and the Whigs again in 1841.

40. United Secession Magazine, June 1840, p. 344.

41. See, for example, the Relief Church Edinburgh Presbytery's early protest against the Bible Boards in its Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/15, 25th June 1839, and the United Secession Edinburgh Presbytery's later, but similar, protest in its Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/24, 7th September 1841.

42. Rev. A. Marshall, The Duty of Attempting to Reconcile the Unenfranchised with the Enfranchised Classes (Edinburgh, 1841), p. 6. See also Dr. J. Brown, What Ought the Dissenters of Scotland to Do in the Present Crisis? (Edinburgh, 1840), especially p. 11.

43. Letter (17th January 1840) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.5.

44. Letter (15th July 1840) to Maule: SRO: Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

45. Letter (31st August 1840) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

46. Scotsman, 30th September 1840.

47. See, for instance, Witness, 30th September 1840: "we oppose Voluntaryism, therefore, in Mr. Black, on one of the grounds on which Mr. Black, as a conscientious Whig, used to oppose in his earlier days the worse forms of Toryism. We oppose it for its wholesale spendthrift quality which would so fain dissipate, if it could, the people's patrimony".

48. A. Murray Dunlop, the Non-Intrusionist advocate, wrote to Rutherfurd: "Black's party . . . . are not content with men that will vote for him but must have voluntaries and intrusionists". (letter (9th September 1840): NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.3). In the wards the pro-Black party were perversely insisting on Intrusionist candidates.

49. Scotsman, 3rd October 1840.

50. Witness, 7th October 1840. According to Currie, most Non-Intrusionist Whigs had no feeling against Black personally, but because his supporters were voluntaries who had opposed Non-Intrusionist appointments and because Forrest's supporters were committed Non-Intrusionists, regardless of Forrest's 'illiberal and absurd' behaviour, the Non-Intrusionist Whigs were forced to vote for Forrest's supporters (letter (27th November 1840) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/626).

51. Even the Witness, after the election, admitted the importance of this aspect of Black's candidacy. According to the Witness

51. (cont'd)

(7th November 1840): Black's committee "obstinately persevered in keeping the intrusionists in the field to the end . . . . notwithstanding their knowledge specially communicated to leading parties on their side, that this circumstance was the main ground of the opposition given by the non-intrusionists".

52. The atmosphere of the first meeting of the new Council was highly explosive. Black dramatically challenged Forrest to establish whether or not it was true that he was running only to keep a Dissenter out of the Provostship; Forrest refused to answer. Again Black asked; again Forrest sat mute. Then came the crucial vote when, after two ballots, in the first of which a Tory, Thomas Grainger, was eliminated, seventeen Councillors voted for Forrest and fourteen for Black (Scotsman, 11th November 1840). Grainger was never a serious candidate, but appears to have been put forward by the Tories in the vain hope of a deadlock between Forrest and Black resolving in favour of the Tory.

53. Letter (8th October 1840) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

54. For Rutherfurd's irritated correspondence with Maule, see his letters in SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/642.

55. Letter (16th November 1840): NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.3.

56. Some Tories were not convinced that the minor electoral victory over Black was worth the risk of associating the Tory party with Non-Intrusionism. For instance, Lord Aberdeen wrote John Hope: "I rather think your Edinburgh Conservatives have done ill in the election of Provost. If they could not vote for Black they should have abstained from voting at all. The success of Sir James Forrest is quo tanto the triumph of non-intrusion" (letter (14th November 1840): BM, Aberdeen MSS, Add. MS 43204, f. 199).

57. Scotsman, 31st October 1840.

58. Scotsman, 19th December 1840.

59. Brown, What Ought the Dissenters . . . to Do, p. 20.

60. Candlish, Friendly Address to the Dissenters of Scotland.

61. Rev. H. Heugh, Friendly Reply to the 'Friendly Address to the Dissenters of Scotland, by Ministers of the Established Church' by Dissenting Ministers (Edinburgh, 1841).

62. Rev. R. Candlish, Second Friendly Address to the Dissenters of Scotland (Edinburgh, n.d. [1841?]).

63. Rev. H. Heugh, The Dissenting Ministers' Friendly Reply to a 'Second Friendly Address, From Ministers of the Establishment' (Edinburgh, n.d. [1841?]).

64. Letter (misdated 6th January 1840): to Sir J. Gibson-Craig SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/14.

65. McLaren apparently pledged "himself as a member of the Central Board of Dissenters to the assurance that the Dissenters thro' out Scotland would support any Conservative, who did not back that Dominant Party, against any Whig who gave them any support at all" (letter (16th January 1841) from Hope to Peel: BM, Peel MSS, Add. MS 40429, f. 28). In the five years since the Grassmarket meeting of 1834 McLaren had come to regard the Non-Intrusionists as a greater block to voluntaryism than the Intrusionist Tory party. One wonders if McLaren could have produced the national Dissenter vote he promised, but the Conservatives did not pursue the matter. I have found no other references to this fascinating proposition.

66. See Scotsman, 19th September 1835, and Hope, George Hope, p. 38 ff.

67. Scotsman, 26th July 1837.

68. I do not deal directly with Chartism in this thesis for two reasons. The first is that the activities of Chartists, to a large degree, were unrelated to the electoral politics of the middle class which is the concern of this thesis. Edinburgh Chartism is more relevant to a history of Victorian Edinburgh working class life which I do not attempt to deal with here. The other reason is that the nature of my research materials has prevented me gaining any insights into Edinburgh and Scottish Chartism that are not already offered with commanding authority in other studies.

68. (cont'd)

Particularly valuable is the exhaustive two volume thesis by Wilson, The Chartist Movement in Scotland, now published in abbreviated form under the same title. Wilson's article, "Chartism in Glasgow" in A. Briggs (ed.), Chartist Studies (London, 1959) is a brief summary of his thesis. A more impressionistic account is L.C. Wright, Scottish Chartism (Edinburgh, 1953).

69. It took only a few Chartists, often as few as twenty, to reduce an anti-corn law meeting to a shambles with raucous demands for an universal suffrage amendment or the nomination of a Chartist to the chairmanship of the meeting. For a classic example of such an altercation resulting in the undignified retreat of the free traders from the hall, see Edinburgh Advertiser, 10th January 1840. The rejection of the free trade movement by the Chartists was a great blow to middle and working class co-operation. The Chartists regarded the anti-corn law movement as an attempt to "obtain a little popularity for Ministers, and above all, to divert the minds of the people from the only remedy for all their political grievances" (from the resolutions of a Chartist meeting quoted in the Scotsman, 23rd January 1839). Their only remedy was, of course, universal manhood suffrage. Fraser wrote in the True Scotsman: "away with your Corn Law agitation! To it we shall be no party. THE CHARTER! THE CHARTER! THE WHOLE CHARTER! AND NOTHING BUT THE CHAR-

69. (cont'd)

TER!" (5th January 1839).

70. E.g. a meeting of December 1839 to protest about English Church rates, and a meeting of disgruntled Dissenters, after the election of 1841, who attacked the Non-Intrusionist bias of the Edinburgh Whigs; both refused to accept Chartist amendments (Scotsman, 14th December 1839 and 17th July 1841).

71. He carried this message through Fife in July of 1839 (Scotsman, 27th July 1839), back to Edinburgh at the beginning of August (Scotsman, 3rd August 1839) and by the end of the month to Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, Perth, Brechin and Forfar (Scotsman, 17th, 21st, and 31st August 1839).

72. Scotsman, 29th May 1839.

73. Letter (n.d.) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.5.

74. The Edinburgh Complete Suffrage Union of 1841-1843 was a mild success when Fraser agreed to join with many prominent Dissenters in advocating a modified Charter. But after an initial burst of enrollment and meetings, the C.S.U. was a rather feeble organization which never attracted complete support from the old Chartist leaders and which its middle class supporters allowed to atrophy as the more exciting issues of free trade and Maynooth rose on the political horizon. For details see Scotsman,

74. (cont'd)

5th March, 9th July, 20th August 1842; Wilson, Chartist Movement, Vol. I, p. 408 ff. and Vol. II, p. 370.

75. Black Miscellanies (unpaginated scrapbook in EPL).

76. Letter (1st April 1841) from J. Gibson-Craig to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

77. For details, see Campbell, Life, Vol. II, pp. 141-143.

78. The Edinburgh Whigs were relieved to see Campbell go, as he had become rather unpopular with the constituency. According to Currie in 1839, "the common remark is that Sir John has held the seat for himself, not for his constituents" (letter (30th December 1839) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/626). By February 1841, his unpopularity had grown and Gibson-Craig reported to Maule that "I am decidedly of opinion that the Attorney-General cannot succeed in Edinburgh. He thinks otherways but his friends whom I consult are decidedly of my opinion" (letter (5th February 1841): SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628). Thus when it was finally settled that he was to go to Ireland, no one grieved at his departure.

79. Letter (17th May 1839): SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

80. Letter (22nd May 1839): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/14.

81. Letter (16th November 1840) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.3.

82. Black Miscellanies.

83. "Black will join me in doing everything we can to prevent this last" (letter (17th May 1841) from Gibson-Craig to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628).

84. Ibid.

85. Letter (19th May 1841): NLS, Burton MS 3931/28.

86. McLaren disagreed with Hume over Jamaica and 'some other points' but pardoned them in view of his long advocacy of fine general principles: "The general course and tendency of all his proceedings being to forward the cause of the people, as opposed to the cause of the aristocracy, which both of the great parties have kept too much in view" (ibid.).

87. Letter (10th May 1841); SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/12.

88. Scotsman, 26th May 1841.

89. Scotsman, 29th May 1841.

90. Scotsman, 2nd June 1841.

91. Scotsman, 23rd June 1841.

92. Letter (2nd June 1841) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

93. Letter (8th June 1841) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628. McLaren was, of course, particularly difficult, as Gibson-Craig explained in another letter to Maule the next day:

93. (cont'd)

McLaren "would object to an angel from Heaven, if not brought forward by himself".

94. Brash, "Conservatives in the Haddington Burghs", pp.52-53.

95. Letter (3rd June 1839): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

96. Letter (4th June 1841) from Sir J. Gibson-Craig to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

97. Letter (9th June 1841) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

98. For instance: "to the Liberal Government the Church has owed much less than to Liberalism itself" (Witness, 9th June 1841).

99. Letter (n.d.): NLS, Rutherfurd MSS,Adv. MS 85.1.3.

100. Bruce (1825-1890), son of the 7th earl of Elgin and half-brother of the wife of the last Tory M.P. for Edinburgh, R.A. Dundas, was a barrister who sat as M.P. for Portsmouth from 1874 to 1885. He was a fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, from 1853 until 1862 (F. Boase, Modern English Biography, 2nd ed., 6 vols. (London, 1965), Vol. IV, p. 525).

101. Letter (11th June 1841) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628. I have found no evidence of Conservative intentions with regard to this election, apart from the Edinburgh entry in Horne's 1840 election memorandum for the Duke of Buccleuch which concludes: "even with an unexceptionable candidate I cannot

101. (cont'd)

however hold out any prospect of success; and split as the Whig parties are amongst themselves, I submit that they should be left to fight out their battles for a time" (SRO, Buccleuch MS GD 224/582).

102. Quoted in Campbell, Life, Vol. II, p. 145.

103. Scotsman, 23rd June 1841.

104. William Ewart (1798-1869) was a liberal Whig who had entered Parliament for Liverpool in 1827 after Oxford and the Inns of Court. From 1839 to 1841 he represented Wigan and in 1841 switched to Dumfries which he represented until 1868. A corn law repealer from 1834, Ewart was among the most radical of Whigs (DNB, Vol. VI, pp. 955-956).

105. Scotsman, 26th June 1841.

106. Letter (24th June 1841) to Maule: SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/628.

107. Edinburgh Observer, 22nd June 1841.

108. Edinburgh Observer, 25th June 1841.

109. Ibid. A song, "Duncan McLaren", printed as a handbill sometime during this period survives in the NLS (3.2813(11)); an example of its satirical verses:

109. (cont'd)

"I have set myself up as the city's Dictator --
I'll propose whom I please, like the great Liberator;
And you, noodles and dupes, by your votes be declarin',
You are glad to be tools of great Duncan McLaren."

110. Black Miscellanies.

111. Ibid.

112. Scotsman, 30th June 1841.

113. His lack of feeling for the religious issues showed in his faltering control and his audience was quick to sense the confusion and react to it. The following excerpt shows this: "what is the essence of an Established Church? Is it not this, that certain temporal advantages are connected with the discharge of certain spiritual functions? This is not the definition of a Christian Church, I know well (tremendous cheering and clamour, which lasted for some time). I rather think that I am a little misunderstood. Gentlemen seem to imagine that I have laid down the proposition that an Established Church could not be a Christian Church; I say no such thing" (ibid.). In the question period, Macaulay showed great reluctance to commit himself to any one course of legislative action, thus antagonizing the Non-Intrusionists who questioned him extremely closely, trying to elicit some kind of commitment from him.

114. Witness, 30th June 1841. On the contrary, declared the

114. (cont'd)

Intrusionist Edinburgh Observer: "nothing could have been desired more clear and unequivocal than the views which he avowed" (29th June 1841).

115. A. Dunlop, An Answer to the Dean of Faculty's Letter to the Lord Chancellor (Edinburgh, 1839), p. 176.

116. Letter (10th December 1840) to Peel: BM, Peel MSS, Add. MS 40428, f. 453.

117. At the conclusion of the 1841 election, the Witness warned that "Whiggism must employ some other lever to move the masses than that which it now yields, or it will find that its day is irrecoverably gone by" (3rd July 1841). Of course Non-Intrusionism was the requisite lever.

118. See C. Neaves's article "Non-Intrusion" in Blackwood's, August 1841, for a description of Non-Intrusionist activities all over Scotland: "the violent promoters of the Non-Intrusion cause have every where, during the late elections, been the stirrers up of strife and the makers of mischief" (p. 129).

119. Scotsman, 17th July 1841.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Downfall of the Whigs: 1841-1847

The defeat of Macaulay in the election of 1847 can be interpreted as the defeat of the political and social establishment of Edinburgh, or as the defeat of the secular politicians by the religious partizans. In the former case, the middle class radicals, the tradesmen and merchants, whose major preoccupation was free trade, succeeded in ousting the nominee of the professions, whose lukewarm support for free trade had convinced the local middle class voters that he could not adequately represent their viewpoints. Even less could he understand or act upon their religious opinions, nor had the party to which he belonged been able to mollify the discontent of the Free Churchmen and Dissenters. The support of the Maynooth college was the last straw for the Protestant zealots and the occasion for their successful rebellion from the secular Whig party. Free trade and Maynooth were the issues, then, which brought about the downfall of the Whigs. These issues were the catalysts which worked upon social resentment, political ambition, religious zeal, etc. whose origins lay in the basic nature of the Edinburgh constituency (discussed in Chapters One and Two above). In this chapter I shall concentrate on these particular issues, Macaulay and his opponents, and the elections of 1846 and 1847 which decided the conflict. The chapter begins with a brief section on the nature

of Town Council politics and their relation to Parliamentary politics.

There was a definite lull in political activities and a temporary decline in political feeling after the Parliamentary election of 1841. After Peel and the Conservatives were firmly established at Westminster, the prospect of another Parliamentary election was relegated to the dim future. Radical pressure was off the Whigs and there was little reason to look forward to rapid or fundamental reforms for the next few years. Chartism was declining, the voluntary struggle had fallen away, and no one seemed keen on prolonging the hectic political activities of the 1839-1841 period. There was a lull too in local political activities. The important municipal election of 1840 was followed by a return to the kind of listless elections which had preceded 1840. Likewise from a Lord Provost's election which had national importance and significant political results, the Town Council's business shrank back to the mundane and the trivial. The electorate gave no mandate for change, nor did the Town Council seek a larger role for itself; municipal politics by 1841 had settled back into the rut of electors' indifference and political insignificance. The one exception to this general rule was the period immediately following the disruption when the Town Council was obliged to come to some important decisions regarding the annuity tax. The disruption presented the Town Council with an opportunity to reduce the annuity tax: ten ministers vacated Edinburgh pulpits and the

reduction of the numbers of clergy and a consequent reduction of the annuity tax were now practical possibilities. The Free Churchmen and the Dissenters on the Town Council co-operated in producing a scheme which involved reducing the city clergy to twelve and freezing their salaries at £500.[1] For the first time in many years a compromise solution seemed possible. Free Churchmen in theTown Council had expressed a new willingness to reduce the tax; as Councillor McLagan was reported to say: "formerly it had been a Presbyterian and Evangelical Church, but now it was E rastian and despotic. He could oppose the annuity tax now, although he did not oppose it before."[2] And for the other side, the Intrusionist Edinburgh Observer urged the Presbytery to accept the Town Council scheme:

> it is for the Church to disarm the hostility of the old Dissenters, and to disappoint the expectations of the new, by receding from the high ground which they have hitherto taken (chiefly led thereto by the guidance of those who are now arranged against them), to rest her claims only upon her usefulness, and by giving up an untenable position now, to return to its occupation with greater effect, in quieter and happier times.[3]

But the Established Church Presbytery's response was not encouraging. In August it refused unequivocally to accept the basic feature of the scheme: the reduction of the clergy "would be a violation of their plain and deeply responsible duty to the cause of religion".[4] The Town Council simultaneously began filling the vacant pulpits, since an attempt to obtain government approval for delay was disappointed.[5] With the Established

Church being restored to its clerical strength,[6] and the Tory government an unlikely supporter for any reduction of the Established Church, the possibilities for reform were swiftly reduced. The Presbytery had emerged from the shock of the disruption more determined than ever to preserve the Established Church intact, while many voluntaries had continued to resist a compromise solution which countenanced the establishment principle.[7] In between these two extremes hovered the Free Churchmen who had left the Established Church without coming to a definite decision regarding the establishment principle. This complex variety of reactions to the disruption made it virtually impossible to effect a compromise solution to the annuity tax. The opportunity for a quick reduction slipped away and once again the Town Council abandoned the possibility of reforming the annuity tax.

With the restoration of the Established Church clergy to its full strength and the collapse of plans for annuity tax reduction, the political response to the disruption and religious issues in general ceased. A period of municipal peace followed during which municipal elections were heralded by the newspapers with contented anticipation of no fierce contests or disputes. In 1844, the Edinburgh Advertiser noted that "year after year, among the more respectable classes of our fellow-citizens, political animosities have been dying away, in so far as the choice of civic representatives is concerned."[8] Adam Black was pleased to note that "happily there is at present no subject of exciting interest rousing

the citizens to political or religious strife".[9] The election of Black as Lord Provost had ushered in this period of peace in late 1843. His unobtrusive Congregationalism was sufficiently neutral in the post-disruption atmosphere for both Free Churchmen and Established Churchmen to avoid another exhausting struggle by electing him Lord Provost.[10] He was elected unanimously after the smallest poll since the reform of the Town Council.[11] Black remained Lord Provost until 1848, having been re-elected in 1846, again with no opposition.[12] His civic reign was one of quiet administration, the Town Council confining itself to politically insignificant matters.

While the municipal election of 1846 was a dull affair resulting in no changes in the political or religious composition of the Council, it was preceded and succeeded by Parliamentary elections in which religious issues, among others, brought about a political change of the greatest significance. This contrast neatly illustrates the difference between municipal and Parliamentary politics in Edinburgh. It was rare indeed for municipal elections to be informed by the interest and fervour present in Parliamentary elections. It is true that the Town Council remained the preserve of the religious partizans, those extreme voluntaries and Established Churchmen who continued to prevent the moderate Whigs from hoping for compromise on religious issues. But the triviality of Town Council business and the narrow limits of its practical responsibilities discouraged the partizans from taking as much interest in Town

Council elections as they did in Parliamentary elections. For a Parliamentary election was an opportunity to influence as directly as possible the government of the day; it was a chance to establish in a dramatic and well-publicized way the electoral power of a religious group and a chance to reduce the effective political power of its opponents. The capture of Council seats was a small victory in comparison to the toppling of a nationally known Whig. The likelihood of a government acting upon the annuity tax or patronage because the Town Council willed it was much less than if Edinburgh's M.P.s were elected specifically to bring these matters before the House of Commons. Furthermore, the psychological advantage and stimulating encouragement derived from a Parliamentary electoral triumph were of much more consequence than the minor and insubstantial victories in weakly contested municipal elections. Similarly the middle class radicals, anxious to wrest political control from the Whig lawyers, concentrated on attacking the Whig representation of the city, knowing this to be at once the most vital and the most vulnerable feature of the political domination. It was the most vital because it was the most public, the most expressive and the most practically effective political accomplishment which a party could achieve. It was the most vulnerable because every election threatened its extinction, every voter had immediate and equal control over it and, finally, one of the Whigs' sitting M.P.s was, in his own right, a very vulnerable politician.

Macaulay's eminence as a man of letters, as a political philosopher and as an orator counted for little when these talents were not seen to be serving the particular interests which had joyously joined in 1839 to elect him M.P. When he appeared to ignore the demands of his constituents for an end to the corn laws and the Maynooth grant, his former supporters were inclined to regard what they had once held to be virtues as vices. For instance, one pamphleteer wrote that Macaulay cared more for effect than truth:

> his eloquence has given disinterested help to none of the weak, poor, or oppressed of the present day. A glittering genius devoted to a party as a means of personal ambition -- a mind essentially showy, shallow, sophistical and rhetorical -- a master of style, and not a seeker of truth or champion of progress -- such a man might win admiration, but could not command respect. 13

Macaulay's Rant was an equally comprehensive critique, expressed more picturesquely:

> Did ye hear the ither body,
> Wee conceited jinky body,
> Swallow down -- the arrant loon --
> The mass-book like a jog o' tody?
>
> What's the use o' Tam Macaulay,
> Dreich lang winded Tam Macaulay,
> But to rout like ony nowt?
> I think we ken the creature brawly.
>
> Little wat ye whá's coming --
> Papistry and a's coming,
> Tinsell'ed rags frae Maynooth bags,
> Macaulay and the Scarlet Woman! 14

All kinds of people complained about Macaulay's conceit and pomposity. For instance, the eminent Tory judge, Lord Granton, John Hope's father, declared that Macaulay "has always been considered here as a vain, conceited fellow, and has been quite a laughing stock since his ridiculous letter some years ago, to one of the town council here, which he ostentatiously dated Windsor Castle".[15] The Witness perceived an ordinary Whig party hack behind the intellectual facade:

> we scarce know a finer specimen of the old effete Whigs, -- the men of high speculative principle and low practical expediency, who have lost character during the last ten years, and are no longer trusted by the people -- than the Honourable Mr. Macaulay . . . . His voice has been the voice of Jacob, but his hands have been the hands of Esau. 16

Judged even on these less rarefied terms Macaulay failed to satisfy his critics. A typical distinction was made by the Edinburgh Advertiser in 1847 when it said of William Gibson-Craig that he was at least "native, amiable and inoffensive . . . a useful, working member of Parliament" while Macaulay was none of these and could be accused of "hauteur and want of attention".[17] Lord Cockburn was obliged to agree that Macaulay had neither the tact nor the interest in small but important constituency matters which a politician ignores at his peril.[18] Gibson-Craig was more skilful at reacting to the demands of interest groups such as the Anti-Corn Law Association; he took more care to reply diplomatically and to ease frustration by cushioning his rejection

of claims and requests with kind words and sympathetic gestures.[19] Macaulay, as we shall see below, too often displayed contempt and dismissed complaints too curtly. It is probably true that Macaulay really did not care enough about politics for their own sake; his deficiencies as a politician extended from his basic indifference to the petty details of political campaigning. After his defeat in 1847 when the Whigs wanted him to seek some other seat and continue in office, Macaulay refused to stand again and confessed to Sir John Hobhouse

> that he had a fondness for literature above all other pursuits . . . he preferred devoting himself to it to continuing in office. He said that, after his opinions and modes of thinking, it was very difficult to gain and to keep a popular constituency . . . . in short, politics did not suit him. [20]

Thus, the common attack by contemporaries on Macaulay as a party hack masquerading in spurious intellectual costume does seem unfair. A more accurate description is of a fairly typical intellectual politician who had been drawn into politics by an attraction to the ideals of the Whig party in which the tiresome demands of religious zealots or irate shopkeepers did not figure. Macaulay was incapable of concealing his contempt for these men and their objects and he lacked the ambition for political power which would have led him to adapt his principles and behaviour to maintain popularity.

Perhaps sensing this hubris in Macaulay's character, his

stubborn and irascible reluctance to play politics for its own sake, the opponents of the Whigs moved instinctively to attack this non-professional politician. He was a natural victim, a promising target for abuse and easy to attack, for in defending himself he usually opened himself to even broader attack, uttering more indiscreet and inflammatory remarks as his patience wore thin. He had also the disadvantage, from the Whigs' point of view, of personifying many of the qualities and attributes of Whiggery which had become most unpopular among the electorate. The Whigs' apparent indifference to the demands and complaints of the Dissenters and Free Churchmen was mirrored in Macaulay's defiance of his constituents' hostility to the Maynooth grant. The common charge that the Whigs ignored the citizens because they were embroiled in national party affairs and that they looked after their own interests more than their constituents', was given substance by Macaulay's neglect of local constituency business and his seemingly ignominious fear to go beyond Russell in advocating total corn law repeal when his constituents demanded it. Macaulay's resistance to the arguments of the free traders was also taken as a typical instance of the professional Whigs' neglect of and indifference to the vital interests of the commercial middle class. Macaulay had been drafted by the Whigs in their usual conspiratorial fashion in 1839 and refused to commit himself to any particular course of action, proclaiming vague liberal principles when many of his constituents demanded definite pledges upon specific issues.[21]

Macaulay had become the symbol of all that was most odious in the control of the professional Edinburgh Whigs over the constituency, and thus to bring him down would be a great symbolic victory for the middle class sectarian radicals. It was an attractive prospect made even more so by Macaulay's inability to defend himself ably.

Duncan McLaren led the attack on Macaulay in the Anti-Corn Law Association and most Whigs were sure that McLaren was intent on triumphing in Macaulay's stead. But there is no certain evidence regarding his intentions.[22] It was, however, a rather academic question since McLaren was still the voluntary villain to the Free Church party and without Free Church support the Dissenters could not hope to prevail against the Whigs. Personal dislike for McLaren did not, however, prevent the Free Church party from working with him to promote the victory of a fervent Protestant over a latitudinarian Whig. McLaren was able to combine the middle class radicals of the Anti-Corn Law Association with the religious partizans in a broad front against the Whigs. Both groups aimed at toppling the nominee of the Whig establishment, and that nominee made it easy for them by resolutely maintaining two very unpopular points of view.

Edinburgh was a centre of free trade feeling: its contributions to the Anti-Corn Law League fund and the number of signatures on anti-corn law petitions were generous.[23] The Merchant Company, Chamber of Commerce and Convenery of Trades fre-

quently passed free trade resolutions in the first half of the late 1840s,[24] and by 1844 even Parliament House was contaminated by free trade, as Sheriff Davidson reported to William Gibson-Craig

> I do believe that very few indeed even of us who are decided party men (and I take the Parliament House as the best evidence of this), would go with heart into the election of any man not a Repealer . . . . In short I believe it impossible to look Edinburgh in the face except as a Free Trader. [25]

The Edinburgh Anti-Corn Law Association was formed in July 1839 with John Wigham as chairman.[26] Its membership included a significent number of liberal Whigs such as Black and young James Moncreiff, as well as almost all the middle class radicals led by McLaren and Aytoun. Its activities included collecting petition signatures and subscriptions, contributing to the League bazaars, and holding meetings. The meetings ranged from enormous soirees attended by Bright and Cobden,[27] to the frequent smaller meetings which were often disrupted by Chartists.[28] One of the most impressive and significant of these meetings was a three-day conference in January 1842 organized by Edinburgh Dissenters and attended by 400 Secessionist, 150 Relief, 100 Independent, and 60 Baptist ministers and delegates; the meeting demonstrated the extent to which middle class radical aims had been adopted by many Scottish Dissenters.[29]

But anti-corn law agitations came in spurts, such as that

of spring 1841 when the Whig government proposed a fixed duty, and that of spring 1842 when Peel revised the sliding scale. Between these bursts of enthusiasm the Association appears to have been dormant. Indeed McLaren confessed to Cobden in 1842 that although the vast majority of Edinburgh's citizens were repealers, their conviction was not an active persuasion.

> I do believe that if twenty people I could name were to resolve no longer to move in the matter there would be a good deal of apathy both in this city and Scotland generally. Individually I have for the last ten years done much to promote the liberal cause for its own sake and thus have made many sacrifices the least of which were of a pecuniary kind although indirectly these were not small. You will thus see that you have not much to expect from me in the way of using greater exertions to 'go a head' or to get others to do so. 30

Nevertheless McLaren did exert himself in the cause and managed in the end to rouse the Association at least to opposing Macaulay's cautious refusal to endorse total and immediate abolition. McLaren met Cobden in 1840 and soon thereafter was elected a member of the council of the League. He was co-chairman of the London Conference of February 1842.[31] Such successful achievements as the free trade conference of Dissenters in Edinburgh in January 1842 deepened the confidence and friendship which the English free traders felt towards McLaren.[32] While Wigham and his associates handled the ordinary affairs of the Edinburgh Association, McLaren became a national exponent of free trade, the host and confidant of Cobden and Bright, and latterly the chief Scottish critic of Macaulay

and the hesitant Whigs. It was his controversy with Macaulay which had the most important political results and it deserves close attention.

Since 1841, when the Whig government had proposed a moderate fixed duty in lieu of the sliding scale, the matter of free trade was an open question in the Whig party; not until Lord John Russell's Edinburgh letter of December 1845 did the Whigs adopt an official policy, and even then opinion within the party varied between favouring a fixed duty and total repeal.[33] Neither Gibson-Craig nor Macaulay favoured total and immediate repeal, but they did support the ideal of free trade, and voted for Villiers's annual free trade motions. Macaulay feared the consequences of insisting on total repeal until the majority of public opinion supported it:

> I am firmly convinced that the total and immediate repeal of the Corn-laws, whether desirable or not, is unattainable; and that the only effect of demanding such repeal, in the way in which some of my friends demand it, and of rejecting all fellowship with the supporters of a moderate fixed duty, will be to prevent all change for the better, and to prolong the existence of the sliding scale. [34]

This argument could be and was attacked in a variety of ways. At first the free traders maintained that the general feeling of the country was for free trade; later McLaren revised his argument, holding that the free trade sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the constituency required Macaulay to represent them faithfully

by supporting total repeal in the House of Commons. In any case, McLaren was sure that Macaulay's reluctance was founded, not on statesmanlike scruples, but on base loyalty to the conservative Whig leaders. In order to ensure a place in the next Whig government, Macaulay was supporting a false doctrine in defiance of his own principles and those held by his constituents. As McLaren explained to George Combe:

> we believed that Mr. Craig . . . had honest scruples about the abolition of the corn laws and therefore we did not badger him. We believed that Mr. Macaulay had no scruples at all. We felt assured that his opinions were the same as ours and that he was sacrificing his own convictions as well as our wishes and the good of the country merely because Lord John Russell as his party leader was too obstinate to yield the point. 35

Macaulay, of course, scoffed at such a nefarious suggestion, and maintained, with what appears to be complete sincerity, that his duty lay where his conscience and principles directed him and not where his constituents ordered him. In a public letter, Macaulay declared that:

> while I continue to be honoured with the confidence of the electors of Edinburgh, I will attempt to show my gratitude not by adulation and obsequiousness, but by manly rectitude; and if they shall be pleased to dismiss me, I trust that though I may lose their suffrages I shall retain their esteem. 36

Such declarations whetted the appetite of the middle class radicals and sent chills of fear down the spines of the Edinburgh Whigs.

Adam Black tried unsuccessfully to change Macaulay's mind: "if you and your constituents are agreed upon the fundamental principles, I think you might safely yield this part of the detail to them".[37] But Macaulay was not the man to yield on this detail and, as we shall observe below, McLaren was able to get support for resolutions for more representative M.P.s passed in the Association in reaction to Macaulay's obduracy.

Gibson-Craig was spared the full force of the free traders' attack partly because they regarded his scruples as founded on principle rather than ambition, partly no doubt because Macaulay was a more likely victim than the local Free Church Whig, and partly too because Macaulay was selected as a special target by the British free traders. In February 1843 Bright suggested that McLaren should aim to unseat Macaulay if there was a chance of this being accomplished.[38] Later that year Bright explained why the defeat of Macaulay in particular would be so valuable to the free trade interest.

> As to Macaulay, he is the chief of Whig 'halfway-house men'. He is a waiter not on Providence, but on the fortunes of the party to which he has tied himself. You must cure him. The constituency pill is the only medicine for his complaint. Macaulay hates us cordially, and you will have to choose between him and our principle. Lord John, it is said, is balancing, and I should not be surprised at his taking another step. [39]

Lord John might be sufficiently startled by signs of rebellion in

the stronghold of the Scottish Whigs to make his step a great leap. With the interests of the League and the Edinburgh middle class radicals so neatly coinciding, McLaren was of course easily persuaded of the efficacy of this course of action. Consequently in February of 1843, just after Bright had assured McLaren of the national benefits which might accrue from attacking Macaulay outright for not joining wholeheartedly in the League's activities, the Edinburgh Association initiated a correspondence with Macaulay and Gibson-Craig seeking an explicit commitment from them.[40] The responses were characteristic: Gibson-Craig's was amiable and sympathetic although he insisted on the need for a fixed duty for revenue purposes.[41] Macaulay, on the other hand, replied that it was the immaturity of public opinion which prevented him working then for total repeal, an argument which naturally prompted the response that with men like Macaulay proposing total repeal public opinion might rapidly mature. The tone of Macaulay's letter was noticeably more defensive and assertive that Gibson-Craig's; such statements as "if, therefore, you are determined to have all or nothing, you will have nothing" had an unfortunate effect upon the audience when Macaulay's and Gibson-Craig's letters were read out to a meeting of the Association in March.[42] Upon Macaulay's text, McLaren delivered an appropriate sermon whose major theme was that "when a man sees clearly the justice of a case, he should follow the path of duty, regardless of mere party consequences".[43]

The next opportunity for attack came in early 1844 when Macaulay curtly refused to attend a meeting of the Association in January at which Cobden and Bright spoke. His unfriendly letter of refusal was hissed and booed when it was read out in the meeting.[44] Ominous writing on the wall appeared in February when a meeting of the Complete Suffrage Union approved a resolution "expressive of want of confidence in the representatives of the city; and which pledged the meeting to support no candidate but such as holds the principles of perfect commercial freedom."[45] At a meeting of the executive council of the Edinburgh Anti-Corn Law Association, McLaren obtained a majority for his resolution, stipulating

> that in the prospect of a Dissolution of Parliament, they shall take care that candidates be brought forward to represent the city of Edinburgh, whose views on the question of free dom of trade shall be in unison, alike with those of the great body of the Liberal Electors and of the Anti-Corn Law League. 46

Black and Moncreiff protested at this divisive resolution, and carried their opposition into the general meeting of the Association convened to consider the matter. But by a proportion of five to one the general meeting approved the resolution quoted above; and Bailie Gray in moving it showed that it was Macaulay who was aimed at: "it was to be regretted that a man of such genius, and talents, and influence, should find himself so fettered by his connection with party as to be unable to keep pace with the spirit

of the age".[47] McLaren declared that "in looking for members in case of a new election, they should neither select men who were in places, nor those who were expecting places" and denied that he intended to stand against Macaulay. In response Macaulay wrote a verbose and resentful letter, repeating his reasons for not supporting immediate and total repeal, and for the first time attacking McLaren personally, as a 'demagogue and haranguer'.[48]

With Bright sending encouragement from the sidelines,[49] McLaren took advantage of Macaulay's overheated reply to widen his field of criticism. In a meeting hastily convened to consider Macaulay's response, McLaren observed:

> we know that the men who support League principles are likely to be more at one with the constituency in matters of general politics than either Mr. Macaulay or Mr. Craig . . . . still I do not think that their opinions on general politics coincide with the majority of their constituents. [50]

Quite suddenly he shifted to a religious grievance and attacked Macaulay for his vote on the Maynooth grant. And finally he asked a bombshell question:

> what is the next great question? Every one must answer according to his own opinion; I say it is the extension of the suffrage question . . . . a large proportion of the electors were in favour of a reformation of the reform bill; and that reformation must comprehend some extension of the suffrage. Now, Mr. Macaulay . . . was against an extension of the suffrage.

Moncreiff responded, attacking McLaren for cavilling, for bringing up wholly irrelevant topics, and for, in effect, splitting the Whig party in Edinburgh. Nevertheless the meeting was in sympathy at least with McLaren's condemnation of the city's M.P.s, as it voted its thanks to McLaren by acclamation for his services in the cause of free trade. This offensive by McLaren meant the end of co-operation between the Edinburgh Whigs and the Anti-Corn Law Association. It had important effects in Westminster where the Whigs grew more hostile to the Leaguers,[51] and in Edinburgh it brought about the final separation between McLaren and the Whigs. This final break was symbolized in the end of McLaren's connection with the Scotsman for which he had written articles throughout the 1830s and less frequently in the early 1840s.[52] McLaren was attacked in the Scotsman for his behaviour in the May meeting of the Association and he replied, charging the Scotsman in a letter to the editor, with time-serving and mis-representation of his speech.[53] From that time, the relations between McLaren and the Scotsman were permanently strained.

There were no more direct confrontations with Macaulay over the free trade issue,[54] but although the free traders joined the Whigs in a huge free trade meeting in December of 1845 when Russell had begun the Whig campaign for repeal of the corn laws, the reconciliation was superficial. All the Whigs turned out for the occasion and Macaulay and Gibson-Craig both told the audience of 2,500 that the time was now ripe for repeal.[55] Of course,

such a declaration coming after Lord John's conversion could only contribute to the impression that Macaulay's attitude towards national problems was determined by party considerations and their relevance to his own chances of advancement.[56] Macaulay's action was quite defensible on its own terms; there were many Whigs whose zeal for free trade was equal to their anxiety to protect the nation from a potentially disastrous struggle between the Tory squires and the middle class radicals. But it was also defensible for his critics to assume that Macaulay's caution was hypocritical and that it only strengthened the resistance of the squires. In short, Macaulay's behaviour was open to either interpretation and it very much depended on one's basic political commitment to the Whigs or the middle class radicals which construction one put upon it.

McLaren was apparently operating on two levels. He was urging a perfectly legitimate reform and using every means at his disposal to persuade the Whigs of the need and duty for them to act on his suggestion. But he was also forcing Macaulay into a very uncomfortable political position, since the issue he had chosen to advocate had interesting overtones. Free trade was a middle class goal, a special ideal of the commercial middle class, and the Whigs' reluctance to promote it actively could easily be construed as a prime example of the inadequacy of the Whigs to serve the interests of the middle class. And what use were the Whigs to the middle class if they did not serve middle class

interests? As an irate, anonymous letter-writer to the Scotsman wrote in 1843:

> what boots the party alliances of one of their representatives, or the attic eloquence and varied lore of the other, if neither the one nor the other will budge beyond an eight-shilling duty? [57]

With such a promising issue as free trade, McLaren could exploit the growing breach between the professional Whigs and the commercial middle class. He rallied round him the respectable middle class radicals described by Sheriff Davidson, at one meeting of the Anti-Corn Law Association as, "respectable, well-dressed, and enthusiastic young men apparently of the class of shopmen".[58] These young men were less under the thrall of the Whigs, less likely to remain loyal to the Whigs of 1832 than their fathers, and more likely to follow McLaren into a future in which the middle class would come into its legitimate political inheritance, unhindered by the self-serving obscurantism of clever lawyers and facile orators. The fact, therefore, that the free trade crisis was over by the elections of 1846 and 1847 did not mean that the crisis in the fortunes of the Whigs was over. The immediate issue was resolved but the resentment and mistrust lingered on to inform and inspire the middle class radicals' electoral challenge to the Whigs.

Another equally important issue -- Maynooth -- served the same function and there are many similarities between the cause

and effect of the controversies which raged around both. Both free trade and Maynooth were national issues which naturally attracted much interest in Edinburgh; both issues became the particular grievances of the middle class and were resisted by the Whigs. In the end both were the immediate causes of Macaulay's defeat. Just as the free trade issue concentrated and expressed the resentment of the middle class shopkeepers with the social and political domination of the professional lawyers, so Maynooth focused and expressed the pent-up frustration of the middle class sectarians with the indifference of the Whigs to religious issues. Victorian anti-Catholicism,[59] took a virulent form in Edinburgh. Evidence suggests that it was confined mainly to the middle class; no anti-Irish riots in the Cowgate occurred in 1845 to complement the excited oratory of the Protestant zealots in the respectable meetings in the Music Hall. To a remarkable degree all churchmen of every Protestant denomination appear to have been swept away by the wave of anti-Catholic feeling. In 1844 Sheriff Davidson wrote of this phenomenon:

> the feeling against Catholic Endowment is stronger than any other I remember of; and even among the brethren at the bar it can hardly be repressed . . . . . This arises from bigotry principally, but it is <u>universal</u>. . . . My belief is -- that Non-intrusion, or voluntaryism, or the Reform Bill, never excited so strong a [indecipherable word] as a formal proposition of Catholic Endowment would raise in Scotland -- from general dislike to any endowment of any thing partly, but principally from the old, unmitigated, and invincible hatred of the Lady with the Scarlet Robe. 60

Thus, in 1845 when Peel increased the Maynooth grant, a storm of middle class protest broke in Edinburgh. From every church presbytery came denunciations,[61] and from the Town Council a sharp reprimand to Macaulay and Gibson-Craig for voting for the grant.[62] A petition began to circulate which warned the M.P.s that the undersigned "cannot possibly vote for anyone at a subsequent election by whom such a measure will not be strenuously opposed in Parliament".[63] To this, Macaulay replied in a most bellicose manner, sending a very short public letter to Sir James Forrest declaring:

> I have no apologies or retractions to make. I have done what I believed and believe to be right. I have opposed myself manfully to a great popular delusion. I shall continue to do so. I knew from the first what the penalty was; and I shall cheerfully pay it. [64]

And a few weeks earlier in the Maynooth debate, Macaulay, in the course of a long speech in favour of the grant, had uttered a famous and memorable expression in reference to the ultra-Protestant reaction to the grant: "the Orangeman raises his war-whoop; Exeter Hall sets up its bray".[65] These two statements, especially the latter, were quoted again and again by irate Protestants in extreme indignation at the manner in which Macaulay so scathingly and completely dismissed their dearly-held conviction. And the former statement with its implied challenge was just the kind of inflammatory remark which must have made McLaren's

and Forrest's eyes light up with pleasure to see how conveniently Macaulay exposed himself to extensive angry criticism. Macaulay had predicted in 1843 that he would be defeated in Edinburgh at the next general election on the issue of Roman Catholic endowment[66] which he privately favoured even to the payment of Irish priests out of the Irish Established Church's revenues.[67] In 1845 he did nothing to soften the blow of his support of Maynooth, and invited a political reaction with the most bold assertions of his conviction of which he was capable. In this Macaulay was less of a politician than a man with a deeply-rooted sense of the wrongs and injustices which sectarian prejudice create and a passionate and impulsive power of expression; implicit in such behaviour was that quality of non-professional temerity, the quality of the inspired amateur politician, which beckoned and attracted his enemies to take full advantage of every slip he made.

The reaction to Maynooth was only one indication, albeit the most ominous, of a revival of religious political feeling. The Dissenters had revived the old Central Board as the Scottish Board of Dissenters with precise political aims, including the registration of every potential voluntary elector and the selection of voluntary candidates for the upcoming election.[68] After the quiet period of the early 1840s during which the resolution of the patronage controversy in the Established Church and free trade had absorbed the attention of the voluntaries, the Dissenters were now flexing their muscles and preparing for a new stage of the

battle for political recognition of their aims.[69] The Free Church had been totally absorbed in its own struggle for survival after the disruption and was only beginning to have time to consider its political prospects, when the Maynooth crisis broke upon the constituency. No church took the challenge of Popery so seriously as the Free Church, and consequently the Whigs could only look forward to fierce criticism from the Free Church for their support of the Maynooth grant. And common opposition to Maynooth was to be the bond which finally brought the Dissenters and the Free Churchmen together to defeat the Whigs. This bond was absolutely essential if either the Dissenters or the Free Churchmen were to dispute the Whigs' political supremacy successfully, but of course the old hostility between the Evangelicals and the voluntaries hindered the forging of this bond. So too did the continuing confusion over the establishment principle. But among most Free Churchmen and Dissenters there was by 1845 a movement towards reconciliation fostered by a common resentment against the Established Church and the Whig party which, if it had not done anything directly hostile to the dissident Protestants, had not yet satisfied their respective demands. When, however, the Edinburgh Whigs supported the Maynooth grant, that was at once the kind of provocative gesture which reminded the dissident Protestants of how unsatisfactory the Whigs' ecclesiastical policies were, and an issue upon which all Protestants could unite. Thus the really rather trivial increase voted

towards a Catholic seminary in Ireland was the occasion of an explosion of sectarian feeling out of all proportion to the actual event; that was because this action gave an opportunity to religious dissidents to join in a united movement against the politicians who did not satisfy their particular grievances.

As soon as the Maynooth vote of 1845 was passed and the furore began, the Free Church-Dissenter alliance began to form. At one of the first meetings of Dissenters following the passage of the grant, resolutions calling for co-operation with the Free Church were passed[70] and the Witness greeted this amicably, though making it clear that resistance to Popery and not voluntaryism must be the foundation of any such alliance.[71] It had always been clear how differently the Dissenters and the Free Church had approached the Maynooth grant: the Witness, for instance, was violently anti-papal, while upholding the moral right, indeed obligation, of governments to endow virtuous churches,[72] but the voluntary Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle rejected this selective kind of endowment:

> to insist on the errors of the Catholic Church, in discussing the Maynooth endowment, is not only a work of supererogation, but a departure from the straightforwardness of principle. It amounts, indeed, almost to an admission that the condemned Church might, with propriety, be endowed, were she not chargeable with error. 73

This important divergence within the anti-Maynooth movement remained its greatest weakness and eventually proved the undoing

of the Free Church-Dissenter alliance. During the elections of 1846 and 1847, however, the fervid opposition to Maynooth itself, that is to say, the sum of Dissenter and Free Church discontent with the Whigs and of these sects' political ambition, was more than equal to the strains inherent in the ideological contradictions between the two sects.

This political ambition is hard to pin-point. There is little direct evidence of its existence until the actual elections, but the emergence then of well-organized political opposition presupposes a period of planning and rising political feelings. We have observed how the Dissenters' Scottish Board exhorted political organization and co-operation with the Free Church to this end in 1845. The first indication of this approach bearing fruit was the formation of what became known as a Protestant electoral alliance in 1846. During the August election of that year, the Whigs exposed a memorandum of a private meeting in Edinburgh's Royal Hotel in the previous March of anonymous gentlemen, including Free Churchmen and a variety of Dissenters, "interested in promoting the return to Parliament of members of sound Protestant and Evangelical character".[74] Their object was to convince right-minded Christians of their electoral responsibilities by publishing tracts and composing addresses, by personal persuasion, and by registering electors. Committees were to be formed all over Scotland "composed of gentlemen of different religious denominations who possess entire confidence in one

another" which would correspond with each other on electoral strengths and possible candidates,

> it being understood, however, that neither the central committee, nor any of the local committees, are directly to act as registration committees, but are merely to have in view, and to inquire whether (by private means, or by the formation of separate registration committees) this important practical object is duly attended to in their several localities. [75]

The abiding religious principle was described as "sound Evangelical Protestantism" and opposition to Maynooth was assumed. The report mentioned some difference of opinion between members on the theory of establishment, but "all members are agreed in regarding existing religious establishments as unsound".

Such movements clearly worried the Whigs. Even though Macaulay survived the 1846 by-election for special reasons given below, Whigs like J.C. Brodie were very anxious about the continuation of such ominous politico-religious movements in succeeding months. In August 1846 Brodie sent to Fox Maule a brief circular produced by Sir James Forrest and other prominent Free Churchmen, including Mr. Campbell of Monzie, as well as the Dissenter, William M'Crie, who was to serve as McLaren's electoral committee chairman in 1852.[76] It was an exhortation to the electors of Scotland to send Christian men to Parliament since "the British House of Commons does not represent the religious mind of the community". The leading politicians were exhausted after the free trade struggle and lacked

the vision to perceive the danger of the lower classes falling victims to the spread of Popery. It was thus time for the middle class -- "the wholesome element" -- to assume the moral and political leadership of the drifting nation. In this crisis, the establishment issue was irrelevant.[77] Brodie warned Maule of the extent of sympathy such declarations had lately acquired and the very real danger that many of the Whigs' erstwhile supporters might be attracted into supporting the militant Protestant dissidents:

> one thing is to me perfectly clear. Many of these men, who are forward in this movement, are most excellent people, though associated with many others having very different views and objects than themselves. [78]

Behind the opposition to Maynooth there lurked much larger and more dangerous forces opposed to the Whigs and the Conservatives too, of course, because both parties seemed to be pursuing policies in defiance of the vital interests of British Protestantism. Whether one's goal was disestablishment or the purification of the Established Church, the endowment of Popery was the occasion for questioning the commitment of the secular political parties to the various religious ideals which, by and large, the middle class seems to have held very dear in these years. The flagrance with which Macaulay had dismissed one of the Free Churchmen's and Dissenters' most strongly held convictions -- the evil of Popery -- was taken as a typical example of the Whigs' indifference

to religious matters. Indeed Macaulay had always been most uneasy with the religious issues which troubled the Edinburgh constituency. In the previous chapter, for instance, his difficulties in handling the Non-Intrusionists was depicted. His inability to cope with the religious issues stemmed from a reluctance to embroil himself in issues which as a typical Whig he could not regard but with distaste and exasperation. He maintained a role of careful neutrality in religious quarrels, a common and not very successful Whig tactic, which in the end denied them the support of any religious group and aroused intense dislike among all the religious groups. Macaulay believed in balancing the demands and arguments of the sects and arriving at a compromise which, though it might not suit the sects, was in the best interests of the nation.[79]

Of course the sects objected to his priorities -- how could the best interests of the nation be served if religious interests were so cavalierly subordinated to the political interests of party leaders. Nevertheless, Macaulay and the Whigs stuck to the theoretical principle that the balance of religious interests best suited the needs of the nation. This theory complemented and no doubt extended from their temperamental aversion to the intense and bitter hostility of narrow-minded religious factions. When he first came to Edinburgh Macaulay decided to abstain as much as possible from the religious bickering.[80] It was something of a political disaster that on the one occasion when Macaulay chose

to break this policy of neutrality, it was to vote for a measure upon which all the sectarian zealots were for once in agreement. Macaulay was not alone in his defiance of the militant Protestants: William Gibson-Craig voted with him for the grant, while Sir James Gibson-Craig voted as an elder in the Edinburgh Established Church Presbytery against the motion deploring the grant, and Lord Provost Adam Black tried unsuccessfully to stop the Town Council from voting censures on Macaulay and Gibson-Craig for their votes. To a certain extent, Macaulay, as his biographer noted, suffered for 'the sins of all his colleagues',[81] but in his extravagant defence of Maynooth, Macaulay had set himself up as a most attractive target for attack. Gibson-Craig was at least a Free Churchman and careful to avoid the provocative gestures and postures which Macaulay assumed. Out of pride, principle and contempt for the short-term effects of his conduct, Macaulay had thus, in the matters of both Maynooth and free trade, placed himself in opposition to the wishes of determined minorities in the constituency. Both issues involved much larger conflicts: free trade, as we have seen, was a reflection and expression of the socio-economic conflict between the commercial middle class and the professional Whigs, while Maynooth was a reflection and expression of the religious conflict between the middle class Dissenters and Evangelicals and the Edinburgh Whigs. Opposition to Macaulay had thus become opposition to more than a vulnerable politician who maintained unpopular opinions; it had

become an assault upon the political establishment of Edinburgh, with all the social implications that involved.

When Peel was defeated after the passage of the corn law repeal, both Macaulay and Gibson-Craig received posts in Lord John Russell's government. Macaulay became Paymaster-General of the Army and Gibson-Craig, Scottish Lord of the Treasury.[82] These appointments necessitated an Edinburgh by-election and immediately the opposition to Macaulay took a definite form. The Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle announced the terms of an electoral alliance, which had apparently been formed some time previously by the local Dissenters and Free Church political leaders:

> the Free Church electors, it was understood, would not object to candidates holding the Voluntary principle, and it was understood that the Dissenters would not object to candidates holding the Establishment principle provided their minds were made up to vote against any proposal to endow the Roman Catholic Priesthood, and all proposals for new grants to the ministers of any other denomination. 83

There is no evidence of exactly who created this arrangement, but one assumes Forrest for the Free Churchmen and McLaren for the Dissenters must have been the prime movers. The same mystery surrounds the selection of a candidate in the Free Church-Dissenter interest. McLaren was the natural antagonist to challenge Macaulay on behalf of the Dissenters, but his name was never mentioned as even a potential candidate. This must have been due to his past opposition to the Evangelicals of the 1830s who

constituted the Free Church party of the 1840s. Presumably former Lord Provost Forrest was as inimical to the Dissenters, who had attacked him only six years previously for his opposition to the candidacy of Black in the municipal election of 1840. The impasse was resolved by inviting an outsider to stand who had no previous connection with the Edinburgh constituency. This man was Sir Culling Eardley Smith, an English Anglican and chairman of the Central Anti-Maynooth Committee.[84] Smith's zeal in organizing and serving as chairman of the London Anti-Maynooth Conference of April-May 1845 assured him of the support of all the anti-Maynoothites; and his attempts to reconcile the voluntaries and Established Churchmen at the London Conference, although unsuccessful, must have seemed a particularly appealing qualification for the Free Church-Dissenter candidacy in Edinburgh.[85] Chalmers praised his

> untiring efforts to consolidate and unite all the friends of scriptural truth on the side of their common Protestantism [which] have earned for him the confidence and respect of many Christian patriots and philanthropists. 86

Smith could count on the 'confidence and respect' of many militant Protestants, but the Dissenters were obliged to sacrifice much of their voluntary zeal to support Smith whose letter to the newspapers announcing his candidacy revealed a considerable degree of caution with regard to the voluntary principle.

> I desire to promote the gradual extension of the franchise, the complete liberation of commerce, and the development of the representative principle in the whole of our institutions . . . While I shall oppose the extension of establishments by fresh grants of public money to any religious body whatever, I do not wish to institute an immediate crusade against existing institutions . . . . I do not feel my duty is aggression. 87

He never went further than that to satisfy the voluntaries; indeed he seemed to disqualify himself altogether as a voluntary when he declared at a meeting on 13th July in answer to a query regarding the relationship of church and state that "he would not join with any set of agitators, who, with the cry of liberty and equality on their lips, would seek to get that separation prematurely effected".[88] The Dissenters found that Sir Culling was much more anxious to attack the Pope than church endowments. The dominance of anti-Catholicism in Smith's candidacy was fully asserted in his speech at the nomination, when he ignored the establishment question to concentrate on the iniquities of the Roman Catholic Church:

> so long as there exists on the shores of the Tiber a great ramified system . . . so long as that great institution and that great conspiracy against human liberty and divine truth exists . . . I will stand up for the Protestant character of our country. . . . if I go to Parliament, I will go there with the distinct understanding, upon avowed grounds, that I believe the Roman Catholic Church to be opposed to the constitution of my country and opposed to the truth. 89

There was always the danger from the Dissenter point of view that their theoretical objections to state support of religious

institutions would get lost in the frantic clamour against the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, in this election the Dissenters' viewpoint was very infrequently given a hearing. There had been reports at one time that 'radicals' led by the Dissenter radical, J.H. Stott, were promoting the candidacy of John Dunlop, the well-known voluntary, member of the executive committee of the British Anti-State Church Association, and one-time president of the Edinburgh Complete Suffrage Union. A motion to approve Dunlop's candidacy at a meeting of Smith's supporters was carried over the objections of Sir James Forrest, chairman of the meeting and of the Smith committee, who

> intimated, he would not support it being carried into practical effect. Upon this avowal Mr. Stott came forward, and asked if it was fair for the party who had brought forward Sir Culling Smith, to ask his (Mr. Stott's) friends to support him while they refused to support the election of Mr. Dunlop. 90

Support for Dunlop seems to have come only from the radical Dissenters,[91] and their attempt to rival the Free Church was short-lived. Forrest and his friends, reported the Caledonian Mercury "could not bring themselves to support Mr. Dunlop as a Universal Suffrage candidate; and, accordingly the last-named gentleman has withdrawn".[92] It is significant that the proposed Dissenter candidate was of such a radical character, combining the secular radicalism and the voluntaryism which were the twin foundations of McLaren's Liberal party of the next decade. Also

significant was the reluctance of Forrest and the generally more conservative Free Churchmen to endorse such a candidate; it is likely that Dunlop's outright voluntaryism was as distasteful as his Chartism to the Free Church party. Together, the establishment principle and the pace and extent of secular reform were to be the two great stumbling blocks which prevented the formation of a permanent Free Church-Dissenter alliance. In 1846 the alliance survived these differences; it would not always.

Dunlop's candidacy was never meant to compete with Smith's; if he had stood it would have been with Smith in combination against the two Whigs. In the end, Smith stood alone and against Macaulay. Gibson-Craig was left to win his election unopposed. Various apologies were offered by the Free Church-Dissenter alliance: Smith's supporters were not experienced enough in electoral contests to fight two incumbents, and Gibson-Craig was too well entrenched to oppose at this time.[93] It is likely that, just as the Witness had ignored Gibson-Craig when he had voted with Macaulay for the Maynooth grant, the Free Church leaders in the alliance were content to let Gibson-Craig, the Free Churchman, retain his seat. As for the Dissenters, in the end they were probably unwilling to take on more than they could manage, especially when to press a contest with Gibson-Craig might have resulted in estrangement from their newly-found Free Church partners.[94] It was perhaps the wiser strategy to expend all their effort on that one vulnerable Whig -- Macaulay. His emphatic

defence of the Maynooth grant had made him such an easy target, as the Witness remarked:

> if there is a marked man in the kingdom, committed to pro-Popery principles and to indiscriminate State Endowments, it is Mr. Macaulay, who has placed himself in direct collision with his constituents in regard to these vital principles. 95

And so the Scottish Board of Dissenters counselled Dissenters to vote for Smith, the Free Church-Dissenter committee canvassed the electors, Smith delivered anti-Catholic tirades at the usual district meetings, and Macaulay came down to Edinburgh to vindicate his behaviour to his constituents.

The Whig strategy was a clever one: while stoutly defending the justice and virtue of supporting the Maynooth college, Macaulay and Gibson-Craig rejected the outright endowment of Roman Catholic priests. And again and again the Free Church support for Smith was discounted and the foreboding national implications of a Whig defeat in Edinburgh predicted. Fox Maule, who had been appointed the new Secretary at War, was present as visible evidence of the Whigs' kindness towards Free Churchmen, and he urged Free Churchmen to support Macaulay as a true friend of the Free Church.[96] Lord Advocate Rutherfurd, a friend if not a member of the Free Church, also lent his aid in trying to wean Free Church support from Smith. A group of Free Church Whig lawyers, led by the advocate and Sheriff of Fife, A.E. Monteith, submitted an advertisement to the newspapers denying that the Free Church originated

or approved of the opposition to Macaulay.[97] These attempts appear to have been at least partially successful; there is evidence that many Free Church electors who were inclined towards Smith were moved by the Free Church Whigs to support Macaulay at least in this election, as the Witness admitted:

> it is only fair to say, that all the friends of the Free Church in Edinburgh do not sympathise with the present struggle. There are some whose zeal for Protestant truth is undoubted, who think the time for action has not yet arrived, and are disposed either to support Mr. Macaulay or at least not to vote against him, on the ground that they wish the Whig ministry, which has just been formed to have a fair trial. [98]

The Whigs strongly emphasized the national importance of the election: Macaulay's was the only re-election of a Whig minister which was contested, and a defeat might hasten a collapse of the minority Whig government and a return to Tory protectionism. Thus, at his unopposed election, Gibson-Craig said the Whig government was "looking to the constituencies of the kingdom and especially the great constituencies, to give it the very means of existence"[99] and Macaulay said of his impending contest that it was "of no common importance. It will be, I believe, the single poll which will be taken on the occasion of the formation of the new administration".[100] It was an appeal which harked back to the 1830s and produced the same result as that of 1834. The Edinburgh electorate still supported a Whig if his defeat threatened the return

of a Conservative government. Even some of the Edinburgh Tories seem to have voted for Macaulay out of a generous appreciation of the Whigs' difficult position. When more Tories voted for Macaulay than for Smith, the Edinburgh Advertiser stated that the majority did so

> not on political or ecclesiastical grounds, but from a kind of chivalrous sympathy or impression that his acceptance of office, as a Minister of the Crown, was not the proper opportunity for contesting the city, which could be more fairly done at a general election. [101]

The Tories seem to have been in disarray, split over corn law repeal and indecisive about a candidate. Their newspaper, the Advertiser, took a neutral stand and the Conservative electors appear to have been left with no party guidance.[102]

The election of 1846, then, was not a true test of Macaulay's weakness; if voting against Macaulay was felt to be a vote against free trade and for a return to Tory protectionism, it is no wonder that Macaulay survived this challenge. Smith, of course, supported free trade too, but his victory, according to Whig propaganda at least, would have seriously shaken the uncertain position of the Whig government. In the end, in a significantly small poll on 14th July, 1,735 votes were recorded for Macaulay and only 832 for Smith.[103] The liberal Scottish Herald observed, "he is member for Edinburgh, for a few months longer, by courtesy".[104] And the Witness said the late vote was for the government and not for Macaulay, and concluded "but, above all, it becomes us to

bear in mind, that what has just taken place is not the termination of the battle, -- it is simply the first move".[105] Substance was given to this threat when two days later a meeting of Smith's supporters

> unanimously resolved to take immediate steps for the formation of district committees in each of the police wards, for the purpose of drawing together all those electors who intend henceforth to make the maintenance of Protestantism their main principle in politics, so that Sir Culling Smith, or any other candidate holding similar principles, may at next election have the support of an united and well-organized body of electors. 106

At a last meeting before Smith departed for England, McLaren, who had not figured in the public aspects of Smith's campaign, emerged to establish the comprehensiveness of the opposition to Macaulay which, he claimed, was based on much more than anti-Popery. "He thought that the election had turned too much upon what was called the Protestant question".[107] He recalled the old argument against Whig placemen misrepresenting Edinburgh's interests. Smith's independence as well as his enlightened views on the ballot and franchise reform (which Smith had reviewed earlier in the meeting) were given by McLaren as reasons why even "if the question of the Roman Catholic endowment had never been mooted, he (McLaren) would have preferred Sir Culling Smith to Mr. Macaulay". With Macaulay now "he hardly held an opinion in common". One has an impression of a restless, worried McLaren, disappointed with the reappearance of the old

loyalty to the Whigs in distress which had resulted in Macaulay's victory, and concerned lest the opposition to him should become simply a kind of no-Popery auxiliary of the extreme Free Churchmen's party. He seems therefore to have been forcing wider the breach between the Whigs and the middle class radicals, renewing the complaints of the 1830s and of the free trade controversy in order to retain a broad range of criticism against the Whig party. McLaren's job was to orchestrate the various choruses of protest which arose from different parts of the community in differing strengths at varying times, always straining to create an ensemble and prevent one group from dominating the others, since that might lead to jealousy and disunion.[108] It was to prove at times an impossible task.

But in the period 1846-1847, events favoured the creation of a strong opposition to the Whigs based on Free Church-Dissenter political ambitions and middle class radicalism, inspired by hatred of the Maynooth grant and contempt for Macaulay's dubious conduct over free trade. As the memory of Macaulay's unsatisfactory views on free trade dimmed a bit, a new issue arose which had a similar effect in arousing discontent. This was the issue of national education which until 1847 had not cast much of a shadow on politics in Edinburgh. But with the introduction of increased grants to schools staffed by Established Church teachers by the Privy Council committee on education, it became one of the chief issues which defined the Whig-Dissenter conflict in Edinburgh.

The voluntaries' obstructionist attitude towards national education was one of the great themes of Victorian social history.[109] In Edinburgh in 1847 the issue was sharpened by Macaulay's insistence that "the education of the people does belong to the state"[110] in contrast to the conviction of many Dissenters who gathered on 31st March 1847 in the Music Hall to hear Edward Baines of the Leeds Mercury declare that state control of education was "dangerous both to civil liberty and religious truth".[111] McLaren was inclined towards a national education scheme, but described the Privy Council measure as "one of the worst ever produced",[112] because of the unrepresentative nature of the Privy Council and the favour shown to the Established Church. In mid-April a protest petition of over 17,000 signatures was sent to Bright, since both Gibson-Craig and Macaulay approved of the Privy Council minute.[113] State aid to schools revived the clash between the Whig principle of sacrificing sectarian scruples in the national interest, and the voluntary principle of strict separation between state and church. As we have observed in regard to the Maynooth grant, Macaulay was a firm believer in the former Whig principle and naturally faced a decided opposition from the Dissenters on this point. The Free Church took a less decided view on this matter, maintaining that state aid to education was a necessity but that its dispensation should not be indiscriminate; Roman Catholics and Socinians ought to be excluded from such aid.[114] The debate within the Free Church between the

proponents of national education and the enthusiasts for the Free Church parochial educational system was unresolved, and so too, of course, was the uncertainty regarding the Free Church's degree of commitment to the establishment principle and all its implications.[115]

The education issue was not therefore the decisive issue which could bind the Free Church-Dissenter alliance. That issue continued to be Maynooth, as a pamphlet produced by the Scottish Board of Dissenters suggested. In advocating union against the Whigs by the Free Church and the Dissenters, it gingerly warned against trying to seek unanimity on the establishment principle, emphasizing that opposition to the endowment of Popery was a sufficiently important principle on which to found an electoral alliance:

> there may be a mutual forbearance as to abstract opinion, and parties may unite in supporting this or that man, as the qualifications of the individual, and the circumstances of the locality, render desirable. To be more specific, unless Dissenters can vote for Free Churchmen, and Free Churchmen for Dissenters, union is impossible, and defeat certain. [116]

The problem of the man to represent the union of militant Protestants came to a head in January 1847. It seems clear that Smith's poor qualifications as a voluntary had dissatisfied the Dissenters, while the circumstances of the middle class radical opposition to Macaulay required a local man to be the anti-Whig candidate. A more representative candidate who personified the

aims, prejudices and socio-economic background of the Free Church-Dissenter opposition was needed. But after his defeat Sir Culling Smith had declared at the declaration of the poll "I intend to stand f or Edinburgh again"[117] and had departed from Edinburgh amid expressions of gratitude and goodwill from his supporters which made severing the connection between Sir Culling and the constituency rather a difficult problem. This was resolved by a difference of opinion over the running of Sunday trains in Scotland, a topic of consuming interest to most Presbyterians in the winter of 1846-1847. Smith had no objection to Sunday travelling, but the chairman of his committee, Sir James Forrest, and the majority of the committee were fervent sabbatarians; and upon this issue, Smith requested and the committee approved a termination of the understanding that Smith would be the committee's choice in any future election.[118] It is not clear if Sir Culling was a knowing accomplice in this affair or whether he was eased out regardless. In any case, there were no angry words uttered in public and Sir Culling's brief excursion into Edinburgh politics came to an apparently amicable end. The Dissenter Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle insisted that Forrest, wanting a Free Church candidate, had disingenuously picked on Sunday travelling to eliminate Smith and assert his own control over Smith's committee.[119]

Even more mystery surrounds the selection of Smith's replacement. McLaren's biographer mentions an invitation to McLaren from Forrest and his committee for which I have found

no other evidence.[120] It seems highly unlikely that McLaren's old enemy would have seriously offered the Free Church party's support to the champion voluntary, nor would McLaren have been likely to support Forrest. As in 1846, some compromise was necessary and none of the local leading Dissenters or Free Churchmen were likely candidates since all of them had attained their leadership during the years when the Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists were such implacable enemies. This situation must largely account for the comparative obscurity of the ultimate candidate, Charles Cowan. Cowan was one of a family of local papermakers with mills in Penicuik who had never previously taken an active part in politics.[121] He had in the course of his business taken an interest in the reform of excise laws, and was a leader in the Edinburgh branch of the National Association for the Reform of Excise Abuses, a short-lived organization of tradesmen and publicans desiring the reduction of excise taxes and the substitution of permanent liquor licences for annually renewable ones.[122] Cowan was a Free Churchman and a friend of Chalmers, but he had taken only an insignificant role in the religious turmoils of previous years.[123] He was not a voluntary, but like most Free Churchmen, he was opposed to further church endowment. This attitude, as well as a general profession of liberal ideals, such as franchise extension, abolition of the annuity tax and repeal of the game laws, were given by Cowan in his first meeting with the electors.[124] But the emphasis of Cowan's speech lay on the

independence theme -- that Edinburgh had been badly served by two ministerial Whigs and that Edinburgh needed a commercial man to represent her commercial interests. Cowan was thus appealing to the middle class radicals who longed to defeat a Whig who, they thought, did not understand and did not act upon the wishes of the middle class merchants. The appeal was based on the traditional jealousy of the commercial middle class of the social and political domination of the Edinburgh Whigs. At this time Cowan's less than fervent support for liberal reforms[125] was much less important than his attraction as an anti-establishment figure. Likewise Cowan's inexperience in politics whether at the municipal or Parliamentary level was more than compensated for by his sterling qualifications as a prosperous Protestant businessman, as the Dissenter Mr. M'Crie maintained at Cowan's first meeting:

> the citizens of Edinburgh were now beginning to find out . . . that their interests in Parliament might just be as well attended to, and perhaps better, by selecting candidates of more humble pretensions -- that a good member might be found among the humbler tribe of merchants and manufacturers . . . . The qualifications most required in his opinion, for a member were -- a sound judgment, active business habits, and independence of any party . . . with a thorough acquaintance with the hardships and grievances connected with the locality or of the city which he represented. 126

Another speaker at that meeting, an ardent no-Popery campaigner, R.K. Greville, implied the other great source of Cowan's support:

> we must not suffer ourselves to be carried away by splendid talents, brilliant oratory, or specious promises . . . . Christian men ought to send Christian men to represent them. [126]

As a quiet-spoken Free Churchman and opponent of the Maynooth grant, Cowan was able to appeal to the majority of Free Churchmen and Dissenters and therefore draw strength from the reservoir of religious discontent which had been for so many years a potential danger to the Whigs. Cowan seemed the right candidate to make this potential danger a very real and actual one.

Cowan was put forward first by the Excise Association, but it is clear that he must have already been selected by the Free Church committee and probably approved of by the Dissenter leaders. There is reason to suspect that the Free Church had a good deal of control over the Excise Association,[127] and Cowan's prominence in the Association and his membership of the Free Church made him an ideal bridge between the two groups. By the end of July he had been formally adopted by Forrest's Free Church committee and the day after his first public meeting, a meeting of Dissenters overwhelmingly endorsed his candidature,[129] the Dissenter Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle announcing shortly thereafter that Cowan was an admirable candidate on all counts.[130]

There is little evidence of any attempt to obtain a second candidate. McLaren wrote in 1848 to George Combe of a movement to present William Chambers, the liberal Whig, as a colleague for Cowan, but that the Free Churchmen had objected to Chambers's

radical views on non-sectarian national education and refused their support.[131] There is a possibility that the Free Church leaders were anxious to support just Gibson-Craig and Cowan as the Free Church candidates and did not want the situation complicated by another candidate. In any case, no rumours of Chambers's candidacy reached the press and in the end the Free Church-Dissenter alliance put forward only one candidate, the Free Churchman, Charles Cowan. As in the election of 1846, the Dissenters had taken a rather subordinate role in these proceedings, agreeing to support the Free Churchman without apparently demanding or being offered any concessions from Forrest's party. There is no evidence of any Dissenter discontent with the terms of the alliance, and one wonders at the apparent passivity with which they accepted these terms from their most hated enemies of seven years ago. The most likely explanation appears to be that, led by practical Duncan McLaren, the Dissenters recognized the supreme importance of an alliance with the Free Church if the Whigs were to be successfully challenged; and if that alliance had to be concluded on unfavourable terms, there was every likelihood of revising the terms after driving the Whigs from the field. The great object was a decisive defeat of Macaulay, after which the Dissenters might claim their rightful share in the leadership of the new political establishment. Meanwhile, the Dissenters quietly worked for the election of the Free Churchman, McLaren leading the support by establishing election committees in each of the city's

wards and organizing a city-wide canvass.[132]

A Tory candidate appeared at the last minute -- a joint offering from the Excise Association and the Conservatives. Upon an assurance from the Excise Association that a Tory candidate advocating excise reform could depend on the Association's support,[133] the Tories brought forward Peter Blackburn, president of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Railway Company. His two sources of support were suggested by his proposer and seconder at the nomination -- G.A. Haig, a liquor merchant, and Professor Aytoun respectively.[134] Blackburn was a Peelite, an Established Churchman who opposed the Maynooth grant and had attained some fame for banning Sunday travelling on his railway.[135] Blackburn's defence of the Established Church, as evidenced in his views on the annuity tax and education,[136] as well as his Conservatism, would have made him an unlikely candidate at any time; and his late starting in the election, just three days before voting took place, which prevented him or his committee from canvassing, further diminished his chances of success.[137] There is no evidence to suggest why the Conservatives left the choice of a candidate so late in the election or why Blackburn was chosen, but it would appear that they only began to think of a candidate when the Excise Association approached them.[138] This suggests a considerable lapse in Tory party planning and indeed the election result confirmed that the Tories were in a weaker condition than at any time since the Reform Act. The bloc of about 1,500 votes

that Conservatives had attracted in the 1832, 1834 and 1835 elections had shrunk by 1847 to less than a thousand. The Edinburgh Advertiser mentioned the large numbers of Tories on holiday, disfranchised by removal and pledged to other candidates before Blackburn came forward, as reasons for the poor showing.[139] They all belied the basic weakness of the Conservative party in Edinburgh. For if the Tories had had a properly functioning registration committee and had made adequate preparations for an election known for months to be imminent they might have made a better showing. As it was, the re-entry of the Conservative party into Edinburgh Parliamentary elections after twelve years was most inauspicious.

Almost as inauspicious was Macaulay's performance in the Whigs' large meeting with the electors just before the election. He gave no sign of moderating his steadfast support of Maynooth, of state grants to Established Church schools and teachers, or of the establishment principle.[140] In response to a question, Macaulay declared that he would not vote for the endowment of the Irish Roman Catholic Church "thinking as I now think on this subject", an incautious phrase, reviving memories of Macaulay's previous changes of mind on total corn law repeal which coincided with those of his party leaders. Macaulay loftily dismissed the demands of the Excise Association with the curt assurance that "I have not the slightest doubt they will receive from her Majesty's government the fullest and fairest consideration". It was an

unrepentant speech and he made no concessions to the political mood of the constituency. Throughout his speech, his tone remained slightly bored and rather pompous as if unaware of the mistrust and discontent all about him, or more likely, as if determined to ignore it. Summing up his remarks Macaulay blandly counselled the voters to

> satisfy yourselves that your representative is a man of honesty -- a man who means well. Satisfy yourselves of the general tendency of his opinions. As to details, let him follow his own course, according to his discretion. 141

In contrast, Gibson-Craig's speech was short, amiable and to the point. He expressed precise support for the reduction and revision of the excise taxes into one unrestrictive code, for the granting of permanent liquor licences, for a modification of the law of entail and a reform of game laws. He avoided making a declaration of his sentiments on religious issues and in general would appear to have steered a much more skilful passage through the sharp rocks against which Macaulay clumsily grated.

On 30th July, 2,063 electors voted for Cowan, 1,854 for Gibson-Craig, 1,477 for Macaulay and 980 for Blackburn.[142] The Whigs had suffered a major defeat, the one which Lord John Russell considered the most depressing of the several 'severe blows' to the Whig party in the election.[143] Macaulay was not overwhelmed by his defeat but departed from Edinburgh before the announcement of the poll the following day, leaving Cowan's exultant supporters to

enjoy their victory without the spectacle of the fallen hero to complete the triumph. The victory owed some of its greatness to the assistance of the Tories who voted in considerable numbers for Cowan.[145] The Edinburgh Advertiser had recommended that Tories should give their second votes to Cowan on the ostensible grounds that "we have every reason to think the general interests of the city would derive advantage from his services".[146] All the newspapers reported that many Tories followed the Edinburgh Advertiser's advice, many in order to discredit a prominent Whig, some voting as Free Churchmen for their fellow Free Churchman, and some simply to bring to an end the fifteen years' domination by the Whig party of Edinburgh's Parliamentary representation. Lord Granton, in a letter to Lord Brougham, confessed himself quite pleased with Cowan

> tho' a Whig and they say a Free Churchman. By his means however the respectable inhabitants have rescued Edinburgh from the disgraceful state into which it had fallen. [147]

Thus Lord Granton found common cause for celebration with the middle class radicals such as Aytoun and McLaren who had long hoped and worked for the victory of a middle class citizen, representing middle class interests, over the placemen and lawyers who had, according to the middle class radicals, served their party first and their constituents second. And of course it was a victory

for the sectarians too, the Free Church and Dissenter zealots who had convinced themselves of the iniquitous self-interest of the Whigs in approaching the religious issues of the 1830s and 1840s. United by opposition to Maynooth they had at last replaced an erastian Whig with one of themselves, and issued a stern warning to the Whigs that similar punishment would result from a continuation of Whiggish indifference to ecclesiastical demands. All over Britain, Dissenters had created confusion by challenging the Whigs in this election; in England their success had been limited by electoral weakness and divisions over voluntaryism among the different sects.[148] In Edinburgh, success had been achieved by the acquisition of strength to the Dissenter side by the creation of the Free Church and its political party and by the muting of the establishment discordance by concentrating on Maynooth. Out of the fusion of the Free Church and Dissenter political committees with the middle class radicals of the Anti-Corn Law Association was born Edinburgh's Liberal party. As yet the party was still a collection of committees -- the Scottish Board of Dissenters, the Free Church committee and the Excise Association -- but both during and after the election the terms 'independent Liberal' and 'advanced Liberal' party came into much more frequent use. McLaren had united the Free Church and Dissenter committees' electoral apparatus, and in placing only one candidate in nomination, the Free Churchmen and Dissenters had shared one common goal and worked together in a way scarcely foreseeable only seven

years ago. This emerging party based on middle class radicalism and middle class sectarianism had become a successful anti-establishment instrument largely, of course, through McLaren's able exploitation of a variety of stimulating issues, which exposed the Whigs, especially Macaulay, to a comprehensive and widespread criticism, and through his tactful and accommodating reception of the Free Church party's new-found friendliness towards the Dissenters.

It is of course easy to exaggerate the extent of the Liberal victory. Gibson-Craig had, after all, won re-election with only 200 less votes than Cowan had gained. And Macaulay's defeat was in many ways his own fault; he had not troubled himself to indulge the whims and prejudices of the electors and his vulnerability was an open invitation for attack which would not always exist. The Conservatives would not always be so willing to countenance a Liberal victory as the price for a Whig defeat. But it was not just the special circumstances of this election which would never be repeated. As the Caledonian Mercury said of the Liberal success: "coalition had thus achieved what none of those opposing influences could have done singly, or even with partial union".[149] The continuing success, indeed survival, of the Liberal party depended on a reconciliation of the 'opposing influences' after the immediate pressure for a coalition was relieved. The Free Church and Dissenter parties would have to arrange some compromise on the establishment principle; the members of the Complete Suffrage

Union would have to reconcile their goals with the much more moderate goals of the more conservative Free Churchmen; the spirit merchants of the Excise Association as of 1847 had nothing in common with the considerable numbers of totally abstinent Free Churchmen and Dissenters except dislike of Macaulay. The heterogeneous nature of the Liberal opposition to Macaulay was its great strength in 1847 when for once all the malcontents desired one immediate goal; but it was also its greatest potential weakness and with Macaulay removed what new goal could keep the components of the coalition from discovering more over which to disagree than agree? Disagreements over principles and priorities, complicated by personal ambition of the leaders of the different groups, could easily wreak havoc upon the Liberal alliance, and always waiting to take advantage of the dissension were the Whigs, anxious to regain control by exploiting the internal weaknesses of the Liberals. So if the victory was a great blow to the Whigs and a great triumph for the middle class sectarian radicals, the future was by no means certain ; the downfall of the Whigs might be permanent or merely transitory. It all depended on a great number of unpredictable factors.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

1. Scotsman, 12th July and 9th August 1843.

2. Scotsman, 19th July 1843.

3. Edinburgh Observer, 18th July 1843.

4. Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/23, 30th August 1843.

5. Edinburgh Town Council with those of Paisley, Glasgow, Stirling, and Dundee unsuccessfully petitioned Parliament to suspend their patronage responsibilities pending government reaction to the disruption (Scotsman, 9th August 1843).

6. The appointment of new ministers was carried out by the Free Church-Dissenter dominated Town Council with a scrupulous regard for the Moderate proclivities of the Established Church congregations; even the Tory Edinburgh Advertiser grudgingly admitted: "that they are appointing good ministers, men of right principles and of tried abilities. But they deserve no credit, no thanks for this boon" (22nd September 1843).

7. Councillors Stott and Falkner led the handful of die-hard Dissenters in resisting the Town Council scheme and the appointment of new ministers to vacant pulpits.

8. Edinburgh Advertiser, 1st November 1844.

9. Quoted in Scotsman, 2nd November 1844.

10. The Edinburgh Observer had anticipated a reduction in church rivalry from September 1843 (see leader, 29th September 1843) and reported that the Free Churchmen and Established Churchmen were relieved to let Black assume the Lord Provostship (3rd November 1843).

11. Scotsman, 8th and 15th November 1843.

12. Scotsman, 4th November 1846.

13. Robertson, The Macaulay Election, pp. 8-9.

14. Black Miscellanies.

15. Letter (12th August 1847) to Lord Brougham: University College, Brougham MSS.

16. Witness, 31st July 1847.

17. Edinburgh Advertiser, 3rd August 1847. See also the Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle of 31st July 1847 which maintained that in Parliamentary committees, in working with the Town Council's agents in London and in the presentation of Edinburgh's complaints and needs to the House of Commons, Gibson-Craig was "much more industrious in the service of his constituents" than Macaulay.

18. Lord Cockburn wrote that "Macaulay, with all his admitted knowledge, talent, eloquence, and worth, is not popular. He cares more for his History than for the jobs of his constituents,

18. (cont'd)

and answers letters irregularly, and with a brevity deemed contemptuous; and, above all other defects, he suffers severely from the vice of over-talking, and consequently of under-listening . . . . It was this, and not Maynooth, that gave Macaulay trouble" (Journal, Vol. II, pp. 158-159).

19. Gibson-Craig had the advantage of being a member of the Free Church, which seems to have accounted for his immunity from the attacks of the Witness: both Gibson-Craig and Macaulay voted for the Maynooth grant but only Macaulay was bitterly criticized by the Witness for his vote (see below).

20. Hobhouse, Recollections, Vol. VI, p. 219.

21. For Macaulay's attitude towards pledges, see his comments on them during his election at Leeds in 1832 in G.O. Trevelyan, Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay, 2 vols. (London, 1876), Vol. I, pp. 278-279, or a letter to his sister in 1852, quoted in ibid., Vol. II, p. 310: "it seems to me to be of the highest importance that great constituent bodies should learn to respect the conscience, and the honour, of their representatives; should not expect slavish obedience from men of spirit and ability; and should, instead of catechising such men, and cavilling at them, repose in them a large confidence."

22. In 1844 the Whigs seem to have been genuinely convinced that McLaren was beginning his canvass on the basis of the discontent

22. (cont'd)

engendered by the Whigs' indecision on free trade. As Sheriff Davidson wrote to William Gibson-Craig: "I look forward to having him as the radical candidate for Edinburgh -- and one far more formidable than Aytoun ever would have been . . . . while we do not know how to move, or if we should move at all -- the field is open to Duncan to work upon and I have no doubt he is cultivating it to the utmost of his means" (letter (22nd April 1844): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10). But McLaren declared at the time to the liberal Whig advocate, J. Hill Burton, that the Whigs had started up a rumour about his Parliamentary ambitions and that it was "an unalloyed falsehood and they know that very well; but they hope to serve a purpose by its circulation. To all who ever spoke to me on the subject I have invariably given one answer -- that neither my business arrangements nor my family arrangements would admit of it and . . . that my feelings are all in the opposite direction -- privacy" (letter (22nd April 1844): NLS, Burton MS 3931/13). He repeated this denial publicly the same day in an Anti-Corn Law Association meeting (Scotsman, 24th April 1844). Nevertheless, coquettishness is too universal a trait in politicians to enable one to accept McLaren's denials without a degree of doubt.

23. For details of the successful activities of the free traders in Edinburgh, see Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, chapter XI. Bright wrote in 1842 that Edinburgh's "subscriptions are of appalling

23. (cont'd)

length" (quoted in ibid., p. 231). In late 1840 a free trade petition of 23,000 signatures was sent to Parliament from Edinburgh (Scotsman, 29th January 1840) and one of 1841 yielded 27,000 signatures (Scotsman, 24th April 1841).

24. The Chamber of Commerce had passed free trade resolutions as early as 1834 (Minute Book No.4, 28th January 1834) and John Wigham and J.F. Macfarlan obtained unanimous approval for similar resolutions throughout the early 1840s (e.g. ibid., 7th April 1842). Macfarlan was joined by William Tait and James Blackadder in leading the anti-corn law majorities in the Merchant Company (see, for instance, resolutions in Minute Book No.13, 29th September 1841 and 28th October 1845). Free trade resolutions can also be found in Convenery of Trades Minute Book No.2, 3rd February 1842 and 20th January 1843.

25. Letter (22nd April 1844): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

26. Scotsman, 31st July 1839. For information on the Edinburgh Association the two sources are the contemporary newspapers and Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, Chapter XI.

27. See, for example, Scotsman, 14th January 1843, for a description of such an occasion.

28. See, for example, that of 10th May 1841 in which the free traders had to adjourn to another room of the Merchants' Hall in

28. (cont'd)

order to pass their free trade resolutions (Scotsman, 12th May 1841).

29. For the conference and other Dissenter free trade initiatives, see Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, Chapter XI, and Thomson, Harper, pp. 129-130.

30. Letter (14th March 1842): West Sussex Record Office, Cobden MSS.

31. See Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 225-229.

32. See ibid., pp. 229-231.

33. For the indecision of the Whigs and their reluctance to rouse popular support for free trade, see Gash, Reaction and Reconstruction, p. 189ff. In view of the difficulties which the Whigs suffered with the Edinburgh free traders, it was highly appropriate, although apparently wholly unrelated, that Russell should undergo a conversion to corn law abolition in Edinburgh.

34. Letter of 1842 to John Wigham, quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 249. Such passages occur often in a series of private letters b etween McLaren and Macaulay which extended over the early 1840s. McLaren's letters were destroyed by Macaulay, but Macaulay's replies are given in ibid., Chapter XII. In them Macaulay maintained this practical argument while McLaren attempted to convince the Whig of the moral and practical necessity of calling for total and immediate repeal.

35. Letter (21st August 1844): NLS, Combe MS 7273, f. 17.

36. Quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 274.

37. From a letter of 1841? from Black to Macaulay, quoted in Nicolson, Black, p. 119.

38. "Macaulay is a Total Repealer at heart and in principle, and only holds back because he is an attache of the old Whig party. Therefore I think it would be perfectly just to turn him out if his constituents are Total Repealers. The wisdom of this course depends upon the probability there is of sending a better man in his place . . . . I am persuaded that an election on Total Repeal principles, if successful, would be an immense advantage to the cause. Now all depends on the temper of your constituency. If a large majority of Liberals are staunch to the League faith, the experiment would be well tried; if not, I would not recommend it. You can judge probably better than any one else" (quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 261).

39. Letter of December 1843 to McLaren, quoted in ibid., p. 268.

40. Scotsman, 15th February 1843. This followed the private correspondence between Macaulay and McLaren, given in Mackie, which had reached a stalemate.

41. Scotsman, 11th March 1843.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid. Following this meeting McLaren wrote Macaulay,

43. (cont'd)

appealing to him to endorse the League position: "I have made a very easy path for you to go forward, and that to go backward is impossible. In fact, every one expects you will go forward, and that there can be no doubt about it" (quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 265). Macaulay, of course, was angered by McLaren's patronizing tone and swiftly returned a frigid reply, rejecting McLaren's advice and his arguments for immediate abolition.

44. Scotsman, 13th January 1843.

45. Scotsman, 17th February 1844. A typical instance of Macaulay's lack of political tact was his failure to reply to a letter from the Complete Suffrage Union requesting his support; at least Gibson-Craig replied courteously, even if he refused to endorse the C.S.U.'s aims.

46. Scotsman, 13th April 1844.

47. Scotsman, 24th April 1844.

48. Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 273-274. Letters were received from both Macaulay and Gibson-Craig. Although they were identical in viewpoint, their style was very different -- and a very telling difference it was as this remark from the liberal Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle suggests: "regarding the tone and temper of these letters . . . of Mr. Gibson-Craig's we have

48. (cont'd)

nothing particular to say. But that of Mr. Macaulay betrays great irritation, and a pettiness unworthy of his high character" (11th May 1844).

49. Bright wrote to McLaren of the proceedings at the April meetings of the Association: "I rejoice at the result. Such a decisive demonstration cannot fail to have a powerful influence on the opinions and policy of the Whig party . . . . I hope the effect of your proceedings will be salutary upon waverers in other quarters" (quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 271-272).

50. Scotsman, 11th May 1844.

51. Writing just after the 1844 debate on Villiers's motion, Bright depicted the resentment of the Whigs. "Doubtless the Whigs hate us. Nobody denies it. And yet what can be done that is not done? Most of their hatred is laid to the charge of the Leaguers of Edinburgh, because they bothered Craig and Macaulay; and yet I can see no wrong you did to goad on the shufflers. Macaulay came into the House the second night of the Corn-Law debate and lay down on a bench up in the gallery, and slept or appeared to sleep there I believe for hours. The front Opposition bench was wholly unoccupied during the whole night; and the whole question was treated by the Whigs, and by Macaulay among the rest, with the utmost contempt; and doubtless his vote was only secured by your compulsion" (quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 279).

52. McLaren had actually ceased to contribute articles by 1842, because, as he explained to Cobden, "my opinions became more decidedly liberal . . . . I acquired to some small extent a moral responsibility for the tone of the paper, and hence appeared in an inconsistent position in the eyes of many" (letter (14th March 1842): West Sussex Record Office, Cobden MSS).

53. See Scotsman, 24th April and 18th May 1844. McLaren wrote George Combe that from that time "I was obliged to give up all kind of connection with the Scotsman . . . in consequence of a violent personall [sic] attack on me" (letter (17th August 1844): NLS, Combe MS 7273, f. 15).

54. I suspect the collapse of the free traders' attack was directly attributable to McLaren's absence from Edinburgh from the summer of 1844 until July 1845. He was in Madeira and southern Europe, accompanying his son whose poor health necessitated a change of climate (see Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, pp. 46-48).

55. Scotsman, 3rd December 1845.

56. It should be mentioned that Macaulay told Lord John Russell when the latter was vainly attempting to form a government in January 1846 that Macaulay would accept office only upon the condition that the government was committed to total and immediate repeal (Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, pp. 169-170). This became public information but there is no evidence that this rather belated show of independent spirit did much in the eyes of free

56. (cont'd)

traders to redeem the scandal of Macaulay's previous dependence.

57. Scotsman, 28th January 1843.

58. Letter (22nd April 1844) to W. Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

59. For recent studies of anti-Catholicism, see G.F.A. Best, "Popular Protestantism in Victorian Britain" in R. Robson (ed.), Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark (London, 1967), a brief analysis of various moral, emotional, intellectual and political reasons for the national hysteria, and E.R. Norman, Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England (London, 1968).

60. Letter (29th February 1844) to W. Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/11.

61. The Established Church Presbytery petitioned Parliament against the grant and subsequently recommended that Established Church ministers should "take every fitting opportunity and prudent means of calling on their people without delay to petition Parliament against any grant for the encouragement and support of Popery" (Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/23, 30th April 1845). The Free Church Presbytery also petitioned against the grant (Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/25, 2nd April 1845) as did the United Secession Presbytery (Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/24, 1st April 1845) and

61. (cont'd)

the Relief Church Presbytery (Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/16, 25th March 1845).

62. Scotsman, 12th April 1845.

63. Scotsman, 16th April 1845.

64. Scotsman, 3rd May 1845.

65. Quoted in Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, p. 159. Exeter Hall was the head-quarters of the Protestant Association and the Central Anti-Maynooth committee.

66. See letter (24th November 1843) from Macaulay to W. Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10.

67. See Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, p. 147.

68. See Report of the Speeches Delivered at the Great Meeting of Scottish Dissenters (Edinburgh, 1845). See also, Scotsman, 12th July 1845, for such details as the plan for every congregation of Dissenters to have at least one member attending to the registration of all potential electors in the congregation. J. Peddie, W.S., was still the secretary of the rejuvenated organization; the new president was a solicitor, William Duncan, who was also a bailie in the Town Council.

69. For an elaboration of this explanation of the Dissenters' past quiescence and revival, see "The Present Aspect of the Voluntary System" in United Presbyterian Magazine, May 1847.

70. Scotsman, 5th July 1845.

71. Witness, 9th July 1845.

72. The Witness continued to insist that since voluntaryism defied the Protestant constitution and monarchy of the United Kingdom, it could never be advocated by patriotic Evangelicals; but such criticisms of voluntaryism at this time were delivered in a significantly courteous spirit: "these remarks have been penned in, we trust, no improper spirit, and with, we are sure, no feeling of disrespect towards our Voluntary brethren" (19th November 1845).

73. Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle, 5th July 1845. The Relief Church Presbytery took a typical Dissenter position when it petitioned Parliament against the Maynooth grant: it expressed disapproval of all state endowments while admitting that the endowment of a Roman Catholic institution was "peculiarly obnoxious" (Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/16, 25th March 1845).

74. Caledonian Mercury, 13th July 1846. This memorandum was given by a Perthshire friend to Fox Maule who passed it on to Rutherfurd with the advice to publish it just before the voting when its exposure would be most sensational (letter (9th July 1846) from Maule to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.4). Accordingly the Caledonian Mercury published it on 13th July 1846 and William Gibson-Craig challenged ex-Lord Provost Forrest with it on the hustings. Forrest would not comment on it (see the Scotsman account, 18th July 1846).

75. Caledonian Mercury, 13th July 1846.

76. For Brodie's letter and the circular, see letter (11th August 1846): SRO, Dalhousie MS GD 45/14/665.

77. Upon establishment the circular remarked: "no enlightened friend of evangelical truth has any conceivable interest in defending it. We may differ a little among ourselves as to the propriety of a direct assault upon the Established Churches." It thus neatly acknowledged the difference between the Free Church and Dissenters in its most innocuous form.

78. Ibid. Maule had expressed the same sort of fear in connection with the formation of the Protestant electoral alliance in the previous spring: "the Free Church as a body are clean of this, but it is a trap for them into which I fear many might fall" (letter (9th July 1846) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd, MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.4).

79. A full expression of this attitude was given by Macaulay in response to McLaren's criticism of the Whigs for excluding Dissenters from serving as inspectors of schools: "consider the whole question together, and not merely that corner of it which relates to the precedency of Churchmen or Dissenters. A system of national education is essential to the virtue, peace, and prosperity of the nation. It is an object for which the greatest sacrifices ought to be made. . . . It now seems attainable . . . . How has this been brought about? Chiefly I believe, by making some

79. (cont'd)

concessions -- not, I admit, in themselves desirable, but a very small price for a very great benefit -- to the bishops in England and to the General Assembly in Scotland. If you are determined to look at every question merely as Dissenters, you may resent this. But you are not only Dissenters -- you are also citizens. . . . that while we are squabbling about Intrusion and Non-Intrusion, multitudes of youth should, in every great city of the realm, be ripening for the brothel and the treadmill, -- this is, I do think, as serious a public calamity as can well be imagined. . . . The etiquette between Scotch sects is not the only thing that a Government has to look to. It is charged with the care of the physical and moral interests of a vast community" (quoted in Mackie, McLaren, Vol. I, p. 220).

80. "It was the general opinion of Macaulay's friends at Edinburgh that he would do well to avoid exposing himself to the blows, which were sure to fall about the head of a Parliamentary representative, at a time when his constituents were engaged in such fierce cross-fighting. He certainly consulted his comfort, and possibly his political interests, when he decided on refraining from an interference which would have offended most parties, and satisfied none" (Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, p. 81). Macaulay's neutrality extended even to avoiding spending Sundays in the city "for to whatever church I go, I shall give offence to somebody" (quoted in ibid., p. 183).

81. Ibid., p. 178. Macaulay probably suffered too for the harsh and peremptory treatment by the Houses of Parliament of the claims of the Non-Intrusionists in the early 1840s (see Omond, Lord Advocates (Second Series), p. 62 ff).

82. Trevelyan wrote that "Macaulay obtained the post which he preferred, as the least likely to interfere with his historical labours" (Macaulay, Vol. II, p. 173).

83. Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle, 4th July 1846.

84. Smith (1805-1863), a nephew of the Duke of Wellington, had been M.P. for Pontefract in 1830-1831 and later contested various other seats unsuccessfully. He advocated disestablishment but was a loyal member of the Church of England who built and endowed churches himself (DNB, Vol. VI, pp. 316-317).

85. For Smith's activities, see the section entitled "Maynooth" in the introduction to Norman, Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England.

86. Dr. T. Chalmers, On the Evangelical Alliance (Edinburgh, 1846), p.3. Smith was the founder and first director of the Evangelical Alliance whose chief aim was the unification of all Protestants in the defence and propagation of Protestant principles.

87. Scotsman, 11th July 1846.

88. Scotsman, 15th July 1846.

89. Scotsman, 11th July 1846.

90. Edinburgh Advertiser, 10th July 1846.

91. Scottish Herald, 10th July 1846.

92. Caledonian Mercury, 13th July 1846.

93. Robertson, The Macaulay Election, pp. 1-7.

94. The Dissenter Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle approved of Dunlop's candidacy but did not insist upon it when Forrest and his supporters would not tolerate Dunlop (see 11th July 1846 edition).

95. Witness, 8th July 1846.

96. See Maule's speech at the election of Gibson-Craig when he declared that "I stand here speaking in the character of one belonging to the Free Church, and declare that the gratitude and honour of the Free Church is also involved in this question" (Scotsman, 15th July 1846).

97. The advertisement announced that "we, in common with a great number of our brethren in the Free Church, are decidedly against opposing Mr. Macaulay on this occasion, and assuming, as such opposition would imply, an attitude of hostility towards the Government" (Edinburgh Courant, 13th July 1846). Among the signatures were those of Archibald Davidson, James Moncreiff and J.C. Brodie.

98. Witness, 11th July 1846.

99. Scotsman, 15th July 1846.

100. Ibid.

101. Edinburgh Advertiser, 17th July 1846.

102. I have found no MS evidence for Conservative party affairs and newspaper reports are vague. The Advertiser summed up the party's part in the election in this way: "although the Conservatives are not as a party concerned in this contest, they can hardly view it with indifference. . . . we know that several of them will give their votes for Sir Culling Smith, independently altogether of political or voluntary considerations; and solely on the broad constitutional ground of supporting the Protestant institutions of the country. This is a matter in which they must judge for themselves; and in which the party cannot be compromised by the acts of individual voters" (14th July 1846).

103. Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 107.

104. Scottish Herald, 17th July 1846.

105. Witness, 15th July 1846.

106. Scotsman, 18th July 1846. "The opening of an office for the registration of independent electors at the time added considerably to the strength of the opposition party to the Parliament House clique" (J. Colston, The Approaching General Election (Edinburgh, 1866), p. 21).

107. Scotsman, 25th July 1846.

108. Mackie wrote that McLaren "set himself to establish an Independent Liberal party in Edinburgh -- a party comprehensive yet compactly knit together, combining the various cohorts of Dissenters, Free Traders, and Social Reformers, into one invincible legion, deriving its strength from conviction and mutual sympathy, as well as from discipline and loyalty" (McLaren, Vol. II, p. 27).

109. By the 1850s the education issue had become one of the perennial Scottish political controversies, prompting Lord Aberdeen to predict in 1854 that the "education question is likely to become a real torment, as indeed everything Scotch is. They are a people made to wrangle, and whose supreme delight is to worry each other. Whenever they differ at all, they cannot do so without bitterness and rancour" (letter (3rd February 1854) to John Hope: BM, Aberdeen MSS, Add. MS 43206, f. 290).

110. From a speech quoted in Edinburgh Courant, 29th July 1847.

111. Scotsman, 3rd April 1847.

112. Ibid.

113. Scotsman, 17th April 1847.

114. See resolutions of Edinburgh Free Church Presbytery in Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/25, 16th April 1847, the theme of which was summed up in the phrase "cautious reserve is, in the main, the safe and becoming attitude to be maintained".

115. See Withrington, "Free Church Educational Scheme" and Chapter Six below.

116. From page six of a copy of the pamphlet printed in United Secession Magazine, August 1846, pp. 388-389.

117. Scotsman, 18th July 1846.

118. See the published correspondence between Forrest and Smith in Scotsman, 13th January 1847.

119. Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle, 16th January 1847.

120. Mackie, McLaren, Vol. II, p. 30.

121. Cowan's autobiography, Reminiscences, privately printed, (Edinburgh, 1878), is wholly lacking in information regarding the important aspects of his political career. Cowan's diaries for the early 1840s in the EPL are singularly devoid of political references, corroborating evidence of his lack of participation in politics in the years before 1847. There are only business records in the Cowan MSS at the Valleyfield paper works near Penicuik.

122. For a full statement of the Association's aims by a critical and anonymous pamphleteer, see The Edinburgh Election (Edinburgh, 1847) in EPL. It was started in Edinburgh in the late spring by a group of spirit merchants, tradesmen and manufacturers like Cowan who had no previous connection with politics. It does not appear to have survived the election in Edinburgh.

123. He had written a pamphlet in 1840 which developed as a

123. (cont'd)

defence for the Veto Act the comparison of the Queen's a nd the patron's recommending power and Parliament's and the elders' veto power. But later, Cowan said his pamphlet, The Analogy Which Subsists Between the British Constitution . . . and That of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1840), had never been popular and was perhaps not even put on sale (Reminiscences, p. 292).

124. Scotsman, 28th July 1847.

125. He was vague about specific reforms and in the case of the ballot, for instance, echoed the cautious hesitancy of the Whigs in the 1830s: "though he would rather avoid the vote by ballot, he would be in favour of it should there be no other remedy for intimidation and oppression" (ibid.).

126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.

128. In the case of the Greenock branch of the Excise Association, Lord Melgund wrote to his father, the Earl of Minto, that "the society or at least its leaders are, we have ascertained, very much under Free Church influence" (letter (16th July 1847): NLS, Minto MS 128.3). This may be grounds for suspecting a similar circumstance in Edinburgh.

129. Scotsman, 28th July 1847.

130. Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle, 31st July 1847.

131. Letter (24th February 1848): NLS, Combe MS 7295, ff. 104-107.

132. McLaren mentioned these activities in a letter (13th March 1852) to J.B. Smith: Manchester Central Reference Library, MS 923.81.

133. Colston, Approaching General Election, pp. 22-23.

134. Edinburgh Advertiser, 30th July 1847.

135. Caledonian Mercury, 29th July 1847. Blackburn (1811-1870) was M.P. for Stirlingshire from 1855 to 1865, serving as Scottish Lord of the Treasury in 1859 (Boase, Modern English Biography, Vol. I, p. 296).

136. He said in his first large public meeting that "he did not know particularly how this annuity tax was a grievance to the people of Edinburgh; but however willing he might be to consider the subject, he would not consent on any account to take it away from the ministers of Edinburgh" (Scotsman, 31st July 1847). And he maintained "that education should be a religious and strictly Protestant education" supervised by Established Church teachers.

137. Edinburgh Courant, 29th July 1847.

138. See Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, p. 185.

139. Edinburgh Advertiser, 3rd August 1847.

140. Scotsman, 28th July 1847.

141. Ibid.

142. Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p.108.

143. See letter (2nd August 1847) from Fanny Russell to her brother, Lord Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 128.4.

144. He wrote a short note to a friend, T.F. Ellis, on the evening after the voting: "I am beaten, but not at all the less happy for being so. I think that having once been manumitted, after the old fashion, by a slap in the face, I shall not take to bondage again. But there is time to consider that matter" (quoted in Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, p. 187). Macaulay used his newly acquired retirement well, publishing the first two volumes of his History of England a year later. On their successful reception, Macaulay wrote Rutherfurd that "I have really great reason to feel obliged to Mr. Cowan, Duncan McLaren, Sir James Forrest, and other gentlemen whose names I have very ungratefully forgotten" (letter (26th December 1848): NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.4.).

145. Out of the 980 votes for Blackburn, 659 were split with Cowan; most of these split votes came from the New Town polling districts, such as Hope Street, Tanfield and George Street, where there was the highest concentration of Tory voters (see table of district voting in Scotsman, 28th August 1847).

146. Edinburgh Advertiser, 30th July 1847.

147. Letter (12th August 1847): University College, Brougham MSS.

148. For the election and its results, see Gash, Reaction and Reconstruction, p. 103 ff.

149. Caledonian Mercury, 2nd August 1847.

CHAPTER SIX

The Breakdown of the Liberal Alliance: 1847-1852

The downfall of the Whigs was accomplished, as described in the last chapter, by the formation of a Liberal alliance. This chapter deals with the collapse of that Liberal alliance of 1847, which led to the recovery of the Whigs' fortunes. This collapse was the result of differences between the Dissenters and the Free Churchmen over secular political issues as well as church questions. These ideological differences were complemented by rivalry between the two sects for political power and control of the Liberal party. The years after 1847 were fairly quiet in Edinburgh; without Macaulay and without such stirring issues as free trade, the constituency was untroubled by political controversy for much of the time until 1852. During these quiet years the Free Churchmen and Dissenters tended to pursue separate goals within different interest groups, some of which are discussed below. Meanwhile the Dissenters were invigorated by the union of the United Secession and Relief Churches in the United Presbyterian Church. It soon had a journalistic mouthpiece in the Scottish Press, a newspaper which supported McLaren and the Dissenter party. Another new newspaper, the Edinburgh News, under the control of a group of liberal Free Churchmen, including Rev. Dr. Begg,[1] supporting disestablishment and franchise reform, provided a contrast to the conservative Witness and indicated the variety of opinion within the

Free Church. Over these fairly quiet years the Dissenters and the majority of Free Churchmen gradually drew apart and by the time of the election of 1852 it was too late to bring them together again. Ideological conflict and sectarian ambition as well as the absence of an obvious issue or enemy to coalesce the disparate units of the old Liberal coalition brought about a total collapse of the Liberal alliance and the triumphant re-election of Macaulay.

This chapter concentrates on the divisions within the Liberal party as seen in the different interest groups supported by the Free Church and Dissenters and by their different reactions to the two important issues of education and the annuity tax. While the Liberals were failing to define a common Liberal party programme or ideology, the Whigs appear to have waited for the divisions to bear fruit while carefully avoiding the kind of provocative activities which told against Macaulay in the early 1840s. They were then in a position, in 1852, to derive the maximum advantage from the Liberals' disarray and were the beneficiaries of a reaction among some voters against the sectarian bickering and pettiness. At first, however, in the period considered in this chapter, the Liberals continued to enjoy political success. In the municipal election of 1848, when Adam Black retired from the Lord Provostship, the Whig nominee, Robert Chambers, the publisher, was so discouraged by the Liberal opposition that his name was not even put into nomination.[2] The successful Liberal candidate was William Johnston, a prosperous printer and map engraver, and a

Free Churchman. Again a Free Churchman had been the Liberal standard bearer[3] and Johnston (knighted in 1851) became the leader of the Free Church party which, by 1852, had grown estranged from the Dissenters. Sir James Forrest's name appears but rarely in newspapers or correspondence after 1847. But his successor as leader of the Free Church party retained all of Forrest's hostility to voluntaryism and secular radicalism as well as his considerable personal ambition. Thus, the arrival of Johnston marks the apex of the Free Church-Dissenter alliance's electoral success as well as the start of the period of increasing tension and eventual disintegration within the Liberal party.

The breakdown of the Liberal alliance was preceded by a kind of disintegration in the middle class radical movement. No single goal replaced free trade as the common goal of the middle class radicals, and no issue emerged after 1846 which was as embarrassing to the Whigs as free trade had been. There was a succession of radical associations, each flourishing briefly before being replaced by another similar association. Most had some kind of Parliamentary reform as a goal and were organized and led by the same group of Dissenter middle class radicals, including Thomas Russell, J.H. Stott, Duncan McLaren, Andrew Fyfe, Professor Dick and John Wigham. A kind of unity thus existed among these associations in their common leadership and a common theme -- the further liberalization of institutions and individual freedom in politics, business, government and religion. Most of the

associations described below were local chapters of national organizations. It appears that none of them enjoyed mass support; the attendance at most of their meetings was approximately 100 (although larger meetings were not infrequent). They served as publicizing bodies, meeting at intervals to discuss and to protest, to pass resolutions and to collect signatures, to send petitions to sympathetic M.P.s, to select delegates to national conferences, and then to listen to their reports of the proceedings. The meeting was their medium, and the tone was unfailingly respectable. Their success should not perhaps be measured in terms of the attainment of the reforms they advocated and which materialized only after many years had passed. What they did succeed in doing was to maintain the middle class radical movement in Edinburgh, keeping alive the radical tradition in a moderate era, and ultimately attracting the support of the working class electors. The Liberal party owed its electoral successes of 1865 and 1868 in part to the respect and appreciation of the working class voters for McLaren's advocacy of Parliamentary reform throughout the long moderate years of the 1850s. But as we shall see in terms of the 1852 election, the immediate result of the middle class radicals' activities was to impose another strain upon the tenuous alliance with the conservative Free Churchmen.

A typical middle class radical organization of the period was the Financial Reform Association of 1848-1849, the Edinburgh branch of Cobden's pet project of 1848.[4] Its ideal was economy

in government and the abolition of the income tax, a programme promulgated at its first large meeting in late 1848.[5] It won the support of Cowan and the two Free Church newspapers, and enjoyed a favourable reception in the Merchant Company and the Chamber of Commerce.[6] The Association was sufficiently well-supported to produce a series of tracts advocating the reduction of national expenditure[7] and it had meetings from time to time in the spring of 1849.[8] William Chambers, the liberal Whig, was president of the Association. Apart from this fact, I have found no information about the membership and internal organization of the Association. Like all the other middle class radical associations of this period in Edinburgh, the Financial Reform Association had no records which have survived to the present day and we are consequently left with fleeting newspaper reports and an occasional pamphlet as imperfect evidence of their organization and strength. In late 1849 the Association underwent a metamorphosis: it became the National Financial and Parliamentary Reform Association, the Edinburgh branch of the Manchester-oriented Parliamentary and Financial Reform Association, designed by John Bright to unite the working and middle classes over Hume's Little Charter.[9] At its first large meeting in November, its more radical aims of large-scale franchise reform, shorter Parliaments, the ballot and equal electoral districts elicited highly significant disfavour from Lord Provost Johnston.[10] He thus gave evidence of the potentially very serious differences over secular reform between the conser-

vative Free Churchmen and the middle class radicals, who were mainly Dissenters. This difference of opinion, together with their differences over establishment, was later to wreak havoc in the Liberal alliance. The Witness reported the meeting without comment, while the Edinburgh News enthusiastically endorsed the new Association, showing that liberal Free Churchmen were willing to join with the radical Dissenters in the campaign for far-reaching secular reform.[11] Judging, however, from the dearth of any other evidence of further activities, the National Financial and Parliamentary Reform Association soon ceased to have an active existence in Edinburgh, anticipating the death of its mother organization by several years. Perhaps the current annuity tax agitation (see below) absorbed the energies of the Dissenters while the inauspicious disagreements revealed at its first meeting discouraged the proponents of the Association from persevering further.

There was in any case another Manchester-oriented radical association which was attracting the sympathy and participation of the middle class radicals. This was the Edinburgh League of Universal Brotherhood, the Edinburgh branch of the Cobdenite Peace Society, which was formed in Edinburgh in April 1847.[12] The aims of this group were the extension of the free trade concept from economic to political cosmopolitanism, with pacifism, international arbitration and the elimination of colonial possessions as long terms goals. It gained 400 members within a few months,[13]

but its goal was not a mass movement, as the Annual Report of 1849 stressed:

> it is the policy of the League to discover individuals of active spirits and liberal minds, and to endeavour to enlist them as pioneers in the work of human brotherhood, rather than to seek to operate upon great assemblies . . . . we seek to find, and combine in action, teachers and leaders; and then we trust to those teachers and leaders operating in those circles where they are known and have influence. [14]

The first president was a merchant, William Miller, who by 1851 had been succeeded by John Wigham, past president of the Edinburgh Anti-Corn Law Association.[15] The activities of the League were confined to occasional meetings, the distribution of League tracts and the League's international monthly, Bond of Brotherhood,[16] and the posting of placards warning against enlistment in the services.[17] The budget for 1848-1849 was only £47, of which £28 was raised by subscription and £15 by sale of publications; the major expense was £31 on publishing and printing, and it was ruefully admitted that their expenses "considerably exceed their receipts".[18] In the following years, the League appears to have led a faltering existence, meeting only very occasionally and without much publicity.[19] The Edinburgh League did send six delegates to the 1850 Frankfort Peace Congress, among whom were Thomas Russell and Wigham,[20] and in October 1853 as war with Russia threatened, a huge two-day peace conference was held.[21]

In 1851-1852 when the Whigs revived hopes of Parliamentary reform, successors to the National Financial and Parliamentary

Reform Association sprang into being. There is scanty evidence of a Social Reform Association meeting in temperance coffee-houses in early 1851. Wigham, Stott and McLaren were the leaders of this movement for suffrage extension.[22] It was superseded in early 1852 by a Parliamentary Reform Committee which, again under McLaren's and Stott's leadership, supported these radical measures: poor-rate qualification for the franchise, equal proportion of Scots to English constituencies (with a minimum of 5,000 electors in each burgh constituency), franchise for all forty shilling free-holders or tenants of land of that value (and a requirement for the latter of three months' residency in each year to prevent faggot-voting), automatic registration for all people eligible to vote, no property qualifications for M.P.s, triennial Parliaments and the ballot.[23] These measures were cordially endorsed by a large public meeting in late January 1852, a meeting which few Whigs attended, inspiring the Edinburgh Advertiser to observe that "the old Whig party . . . will not turn out at the summons of Manchester".[24] Few Free Churchmen turned out either; Johnston was not there and the only Free Churchmen to speak were J.F. Macfarlan and Charles Cowan, who expressed suspiciously vague general approval of the measures while reserving his opinion on details. With Lord Provost McLaren serving as chairman and such Dissenters as William M'Crie, William Duncan and Andrew Fyfe supporting him it is fair to conclude that the strongest support for radical Parliamentary reform among the Edinburgh middle class

in 1852 emanated, as it had done since the 1830s, from the Dissenters.

There was a recrudescence of Chartism in Edinburgh in 1848, marked by a brief period of rioting and the formation of a national guard unit. Several Chartists were tried for conspiracy and sedition, two of whom were sentenced to four month sentences.[25] The 1848 agitation, confined mainly to unemployed Irish labourers, never resulted in the diversity of Chartist co-operative stores, churches, etc. which marked the first period of Chartism. The conclusion of the historians of Chartism in Scotland has been that 1848 was only a feeble repetition of earlier efforts.

The Chartist leaders, Hamilton, Ranken, and Grant, were all working men who had no connection with middle class radicals or organizations. No middle class radical distinguished himself by joining or leading the local Charter Association; gestures were made by some middle class radicals, an example of which was Bailie J.H. Stott's universal suffrage resolution in the Town Council in April, which attracted the support of eight councillors against a disapproving majority of twenty-two.[26] It was typical, however, that Stott's resolution was not just for universal suffrage but also for the usual middle class radical aims such as the reduction of the army and navy, and the abolition of entail and primogeniture. No middle class radical could ever come to Chartism without bringing with him his middle class preoccupations, and it is an indication of Stott's basic commitment that when he went to gaol in August 1848,

it was not for Chartist conspiracy but for non-payment of his annuity tax. There was an ill-fated attempt to create another Complete Suffrage Union in 1848. Professor Dick struggled in the late spring to maintain a successful Edinburgh branch of William Lovett's People's League, which sought a wide variety of social and political reforms.[27] In Edinburgh, equalized taxation, disestablishment and franchise extension were given equal emphasis by Professor Dick, and moral force was very much the mood of the League's meetings.[28] But this attempt "to effect a union of the working and middle classes, and to combine all true reformers in one united and peaceful movement" [29] quietly failed over the summer of 1848, apparently falling between the two stools of universal and household suffrage, serving the interests neither of the working nor of the middle class radicals. The National Financial and Parliamentary Reform Association of the following year seems to have suffered the same fate. In Edinburgh there remained an ideological gulf between the working and middle class radicals, which came more and more to be defined by the issue of household v. universal suffrage. Until the middle class radicals were seen by the working class radicals to regard universal suffrage as their primary goal, the middle class radicals had little hope of attracting lasting working class support for their ephemeral assocations. The middle class radicals in Edinburgh remained isolated from the working class radicals in much the same way that the Manchester group in England was unable to arrange a permanent

alliance with English working class radicals. Much later, in the mid-1860s, McLaren's middle class radicals enjoyed a reconciliation with the working class in the Liberal party of that time, and no doubt the Dissenters' friendliness towards the working class in the 1850s formed a valuable background to this alliance. But the short-term results of the middle class reform movement of the period 1847-1852 was the disruption of the Free Church-Dissenter alliance, with no compensating support from the working class radicals for the Dissenter political group.

Meanwhile the Free Church party was drawn into various protest movements which did not make the maintenance of Liberal party unity any easier. Sabbatarianism, like opposition to Maynooth, was supported by all the main churches, and most civic institutions.[30] It evoked an almost automatically positive response from most of the Edinburgh middle class.[31] But the organization created specifically to publicize sabbatarianism and bring pressure to bear on the government was dominated by Free Churchmen. Prominent Evangelicals had been the major supporters of the Scottish Society for Promoting the Due Observance of the Lord's Day which enjoyed its hey-day in 1839-1840.[32] And Free Churchmen were the most deeply involved sectarian participants in the Sabbath Alliance of Scotland which was formed in 1847. It organized a national structure including district committees, the distribution of sabbatarian tracts and the application of popular pressure by petition and deputation upon offending railways, etc., and most of all upon the government.[33]

Local leaders included R.K. Greville, George Lyon and Lord Provost Johnston who travelled twice to London on sabbatarian deputations. In late 1850 these men and their mainly Free Church supporters were obliged to abandon their campaign by the intrusion of papal aggression,[34] and the Scottish Reformation Society became the next Free Church association to absorb the energy and interest of these Free Churchmen.

The same Free Church leaders, such as George Lyon, served as executive officers in the Reformation Society which shared offices in No.6 York Place with the Sabbath Alliance. In the manner of the Alliance, it aimed at bringing the attention of the people to the evils of Popery, by tract and lectures, and at coercing the government into taking strong measures against further Roman Catholic expansion.[35] The prominent Free Church ministers, Revs. Begg and Cunningham, began to publish, in 1851, an anti-papal magazine, the Bulwark, which was distributed all over Britain. Begg was also convener of the Edinburgh Irish Mission which, controlled by the Free Church Presbytery, attempted to rescue the denizens of the Cowgate from Popery.[36] No other Edinburgh presbytery had such ambitious plans for combatting Catholicism in its own purlieu. Indeed the resolutions of the United Presbyterian Presbytery showed how differently the Dissenters viewed the matter. Although the Presbytery deplored the 'idolatry and tyranny' of Popery, it deprecated "any restrictions being placed upon the liberties of Roman Catholics" and emphasized

that much of the opposition and demands for repeal of the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act were "proceeding on defective and grossly partial notions of civil and religious freedom".[37] The Presbytery took the opportunity to demand the dissolution of the church-state relationship. In the Town Council Lord Provost Johnston's memorial to the Queen deploring the Pope's restoration of ecclesiastical titles and stating that the Town Council was "opposed to the principles and practices of the Church of Rome"[38] was passed by sixteen votes to fourteen over a disestablishment memorial, proposed by Professor Dick, and supported by Dissenters, as a better response to this latest assumption by a church of unwarranted powers.[39] Some Dissenters were intent on preserving the disestablishment principle amid the storm of Free Church protest against the Catholic Church.

Among the Dissenters, however, there was a variety of responses as demonstrated in a December meeting of Dissenters called by the transmogrified Scottish Board of Dissenters -- now known as the Edinburgh Anti-State Church Association. Some very militant anti-papist resolutions were passed; there was only passing reference to the principle of disestablishment in the abuse directed at the evils and errors of Popery.[40] McLaren protested against this unfortunate resurgence of bigotry similar to that which had disfigured the Dissenter participation in the anti-Maynooth controversy of 1845-1847. And another veteran voluntary, Thomas Russell, resigned as a director of the Anti-State Church

Association in protest. The Scottish Press repeated McLaren's argument:

> the resolutions, we frankly confess, are somewhat too anti-Papal for us, not that we think they speak too strongly or untruly of Popery, but because the meeting should have confined itself to Voluntary arguments. [41]

The Edinburgh News agreed that the meeting "has largely damaged the reputation of Dissent in Scotland".[42] But the Dissenters were safely back on voluntary lines at a two-day conference in February 1851 under the chairmanship of William Duncan, who reminded his audience that

> the root of all evils of which, as Dissenters, we complain is to be found in the laws that have been passed, and are now in operation in favour of Church Establishments. The practical object, then, is the repeal of these laws. [43]

A Scottish Anti-State Church Association was the result of this meeting and in its straightforward resolutions for disestablishment, the meeting cleared away the miasma of prejudice which had marred the December meeting. But it was clear that many Free Churchmen agreed with the Witness that in the present situation only a purified Established Church could cope with the insidious spread of Popery and save the nation from spiritual corruption.[44] Some Free Churchmen appear to have joined the liberal Free Church Edinburgh News in approving the Dissenters' disestablishment resolutions,[45] but observers such as the Scotsman and participants such as John Hope, the Tory W.S. who was closely involved with

the Scottish Reformation Society, agreed that the strongest support for the anti-Catholic, pro-establishment movement came from Free Churchmen.[46]

In 1850-1851 the Whigs satisfied most of the militant Protestants of Edinburgh by persevering with the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill; at least the persistence of Lord John Russell and the votes of Gibson-Craig and Cowan for the bill eliminated another Maynooth-style cause célèbre, depriving the Dissenters and Free Churchmen of a grievance sufficiently frustrating to make them forget their differences. The agitation over the papal aggression exposed and revived the serious difference over establishment between the Dissenters and Free Churchmen. With the Whigs for once responding adequately to the demands of Edinburgh's sectarians, an atmosphere of discordance and mistrust developed among the Edinburgh Liberals. There was a superficial unity in the sabbatarian and anti-Catholic movements among Dissenters and Free Churchmen. But there was a dangerous tendency for these two sects to pursue divergent aims and approach issues from opposite directions. While Free Churchmen worried over Sunday trains, the Dissenters were advocating radical reforms in Parliament; and while both groups deplored the putative spread of Popery, they derived from it radically different lessons and advocated contrasting remedies. Meanwhile the Whigs were avoiding the kind of dangerous and challenging positions which Macaulay had been wont to assume. The political implications of this situation were not at all promising for

the Liberals.

Another issue which maintained the confusing and unhappy disunity among the Free Church and Dissenter wings of the Liberal party was that of education. By 1850, Candlish had hardened the Free Church hostility to national education in spite of the efforts of Begg and Guthrie to popularize the ideal of national education.[47] Guthrie's hopes for a national scheme were based on hopes for a reconciliation between the sects. The continuing exclusiveness and corporate jealousies of the sects were being encouraged by the practice, since 1846, of Privy Council grants-in-aid to sectarian school systems. Candlish's triumph in rallying Free Church General Assembly support for the Free Church educational scheme, was, therefore, another blow to Free Church-Dissenter reconciliation. Not that the Dissenters were in perfect agreement either: in 1852 the United Presbyterian Magazine bemoaned the fact that in regard to national education "Dissenters cannot agree among themselves as to what should be done".[48] There survived the old conflict between the extreme voluntaries who wanted no government control over education, and the more moderate Dissenters, like McLaren, who joined Guthrie and Begg in the National Education Association, created in 1850, which conceded to local boards the right to determine what kind of religious instruction was to be offered in nationally supported schools. Lord Melgund's compromise bill of 1851 which would have abolished religious tests for schoolmasters and set up local boards with some central control,

succeeded for various reasons in arousing hostility from every sect, and in any case was defeated at Westminster. But when the Free Church and the Dissenters could not even agree among themselves, let alone with each other, about the terms of any reform, education remained a clouded issue which was not a particular liability to the Whigs, but was another bar to any close alliance between the Free Churchmen and Dissenters in the early 1850s.

During the period 1847-1852, the annuity tax became a matter of considerable political importance again, and for the first time since the early 1830s there seemed more than a possibility that some reform of the tax might be arranged. There were two government investigations and a great deal of public concern as evidenced in the deliberations of various municipal bodies. In the course of the agitation, many Free Churchmen remained aloof, as the Witness did, unwilling to join in the attack on an aspect of the establishment for fear of falling into a voluntary trap. But other Free Churchmen, led by the Edinburgh News, welcomed an opportunity to attack the Established Church and establishment and joined the Dissenters in trying to wring from the government and the Established Church a suitab le reform. As we shall see below, the Dissenters were split too, over the degree of compromise they should be willing to concede for the sake of reforming the tax. Thomas Russell and J.H. Stott led the extreme voluntaries in opposing McLaren, who approached the agitation with more

sensitivity to the practical possibilities of reform than to the purity of the voluntary principle. In between the various sectarian groups stood the Whigs, still following their old policy of moving cautiously forward, testing the ground ahead before taking any step, and ever anxious to avoid treading on anyone's toes too suddenly or heavily. They always remained aware that unless a particularly propitious opportunity for change suddenly materialized, the status quo was probably more tolerable than a change which aroused new and stronger antagonisms. As Rutherfurd reminded Sir George Grey, the Whig Home Secretary of the time, "there is no doubt a great deal of discontent upon the subject, but nothing which leads to any real danger of the peace or difficulty of maintaining it".[49] And by this time most Whigs were also aware that adjusting the annuity tax "would involve every question that could be raised as to the right and expediency of effecting by statute the actual position of the Church of Scotland".[50] Clearly, the Whigs were unlikely to risk major consequences unless there was an unprecedented display of unanimity among Edinburgh's diverse citizens for some compromise measure of reform. In the end, such a situation did not arise and the Whigs did not manage to effect any reform; but in the process the divisive tendencies in the Liberal party were accelerated with important political results.

Whatever the Whigs might fear from instituting radical reforms, they found it easy to establish government investigations when civil disturbance threatened. Thus after a series of prosecutions for

non-payment in the summer of 1848, when Bailie Stott went to gaol, and troops were needed to restrain the angry crowds at an auction of non-payers' confiscated belongings,[51] the Whig government responded by appointing J. Shaw Lefevre to investigate the annuity tax and recommend a solution.[52] After interviewing numbers of citizens privately in order to avoid more public displays of feeling, Lefevre retired to London in late 1848; and after a very long delay, his report was issued in May 1849 and the Edinburgh News reported that "the political mountain which was then in labour has now brought forth an ecclesiastical mouse".[53] Rather than abolishing the tax, it was merely to be absorbed into the common good -- or general municipal taxes. The government would contribute a portion to the sum, thus reducing the tax somewhat, and the College of Justice would no longer enjoy exemption. The reduction of the clergy would only amount to decollegiating three double charges, and ministers' stipends were to be reduced to £550, £600 for present incumbents.[54] Since initial reaction from the Town Council and the Dissenters was negative, Lefevre returned to Edinburgh in October to consult further with the Council and the Established Church, and again the city had to wait many months until May 1850 before news of the amendments to the original report was received. This time the tax was to be abolished, but only after the money saved from decollegiation and reduction of the ministers' stipends to £550 had been invested and re-invested sufficiently to render the tax unnecessary. Thus, the annuity tax

was to survive another eighteen to twenty years; and there were still to be fifteen city clergy.[55]

Thundered the Edinburgh News:

> neither Dissenters nor Free Churchmen will willingly allow themselves to be plundered by priestcraft during the term of their natural lives, for a vague hope that their children or their children's children may escape from the hands of their oppressors. 56

After almost two years of waiting, the Dissenters were bitterly disappointed, and their frustration with the insufficiency of the Whigs' proposal was expressed by Archibald Kerr, convener of the Anti-Annuity Tax League, in a letter to the Home Secretary:

> the Commissioner [Lefevre] has certainly not derived much advantage from his visit to Edinburgh, for he neither appreciates the objections of its people, nor has formed any very Christian or charitable plan of removing them. 57

The Edinburgh Anti-Annuity Tax League had been born during the annuity tax agitation of 1848 and its first chairman was Professor Dick. It was the latest Dissenter pressure group aiming to arouse popular resistance to the tax, and to force the government to institute an appropriate reform. It claimed to be organized simply for the abolition of the tax, leaving the disestablishment battle to be fought by the Scottish Anti-State Church Association.[58] But in practice the leaders of the League were prominent voluntaries like Dick and McLaren and the League was the de facto Dissenter pressure group of t h e period. It took a hard line against

Lefevre's report and disagreed violently with the Town Council when, after a long interval of deliberation and discussion, the Council approved the terms of the revised report by a vote of twenty-two to five. Among the moderate Dissenters in the Town Council who voted for approval was Andrew Fyfe who said:

> his opinions as a Voluntary Dissenter went much farther than the . . . report; but he had come to the conclusion that, in present circumstances, there was no probability of any other plan being carried through, and therefore he supported it. 59

The more extreme Dissenters who controlled the League at this time were unimpressed with Fyfe's reasoning, and embarked on a programme of public complaint designed to reveal the true depths of discontent in the city. The League organized petitions to Parliament, sent letters to M.P.s, submitted memorials to the government and held meetings which deplored Lefevre's report and urged the substitution of its own scheme of reform, which would reduce the number of city ministers to only eight -- the number of ministers that could be maintained by the present seat-rents in the city churches.[60] Both the Edinburgh News and the Scottish Press enthusiastically endorsed the League's militancy: the Scottish Press confessed itself glad to learn

> that the League is about to enter upon an energetic and extensive agitation, in order to imbue the public mind with a feeling of the necessity for strenuous efforts being made to deal with the annuity tax, in a more satisfactory manner than the Town Council propose to do. 61

Meanwhile the Whig government had long ago decided to defer action on Lefevre's report. In May 1850 when Lefevre's modifications had been published, Lord Advocate Rutherfurd had written Sir George Grey:

> I am satisfied that the suggestions he makes contain the basis of the best and most expedient adjustment of the points in discussion . . . . I do not however think that the Government as such should undertake to carry through the scheme proposed in the Report, or at all commit itself upon the subject. 62

The anticipated political consequences of antagonizing both the voluntaries and the Established Churchmen were daunting; and by February of 1851 the enfeebled Whigs were too uncertain about their strength in the Commons to press such a controversial bill as an annuity tax bill was bound to be. When the Whigs' decision was known, the Town Council was furious at having been made fools of by the government and angrily demanded government attention to Edinburgh's special problem.[63] The Council sent off a deputation to London to press ministers for a bill based on Lefevre's report.[64] The deputation, led by McLaren who had volunteered his assistance, joined those of the Anti-Annuity Tax League and the Scottish Anti-State Church Association already in London, and together they badgered the government until the Whigs once again turned to the time-gaining stop-gap of an official investigation, to be conducted this time by a Select Committee including Sir William Gibson-Craig, Sir George Clerk, Viscount Melgund and Edward

Bouverie, among others.[65] All through July 1851 the Select Committee heard evidence from Established Churchmen, Free Churchmen and Dissenters, digested long tables of seat-rents, church attendance and population, and analyzed the 17th and 18th century statutes regarding the maintenance of the Established Church in Edinburgh.[66] In early August, the Report was published: decollegiation was the only reduction of ministers and their salary was to be £550; a slight municipal tax of about 2% was to be continued, but at least the College of Justice would have to contribute. The Select Committee had rejected by seven to two a minority report by J.B. Smith, Dissenter M.P. for the Stirling Burghs, which would have reduced the ministers to six. Instead the liberal Whig majority had offered a compromise like many suggested in the past in the Town Council and elsewhere; but with the prestige of Select Committee support this scheme at this time was the most viable solution which had appeared in many years.

Practical considerations such as these inspired most Dissenters to agree with McLaren in supporting a Parliamentary bill based on the Report; he wrote in a letter to the Scotsman:

> that although the plan proposed is by no means so favourable for the city as could be desired, the inhabitants should not oppose it, but let the clergy reject it if they feel so disposed, and abide the consequences which may be expected to follow. [67]

The Scottish Press, the United Presbyterian Magazine, and the Town Council approved of the Report on practical considerations,[68]

but the Established Church Presbytery, accepting McLaren's challenge, lost no time in rejecting the Report. Decollegiation could only be approved if the second ministers of the double charges were assigned new city parishes; a simple reduction of ministers "ought by all constitutional means to be resisted".[69] Moreover, in discussing the Report, Dr. Muir spoke for the great majority of the Presbytery when he made a detailed defence of the establishment principle, showing that the Presbytery was completely aware of the implications of annuity tax reform and determined to resist any measure which might adversely affect the power and rights of the Established Church. This excerpt from Muir's speech is taken from the Tory Edinburgh Advertiser whose approbatory editorial comments indicated the hostility of Edinburgh Conservatives to the Report:

> is it forgotten that the religious institution of our Established Church is the fixed arrangement in the design of a Protestant Legislature for dispensing religious knowledge and celebrating religious ordinances? Is it forgotten that this arrangement is piously meant for a grand national testimony on the side of the Saviour God, and that it is meant for permanence amid all changes? There it stands, whether for a season men hear, or whether they refuse to hear. Owing to temporary causes, it may in some places be almost deserted, and yet by-and-by it may be frequented again. [70]

Over the next weeks and months the Presbytery received memorials from Established Church presbyteries and synods all over Scotland in support of the Edinburgh Presbytery's defence of the Established Church.[71]

The consequences of such a rejection, of which McLaren had

darkly hinted, soon materialised in stronger expressions of unanimity in the Town Council and elsewhere. A special meeting of the Town Council in reaction to the Presbytery's provocative response unanimously affirmed its support of the Report.[72] By the end of September, the city's law agents were busy drafting a bill based on the Report for presentation in the next Parliamentary session.[73] Meanwhile the League had taken the momentous step of approving the Report by an executive committee vote of six to two.[74] But not all Dissenters were ready to compromise the voluntary principle by approving this half-way measure, and a number of extreme voluntaries led by J.H. Stott and Archibald Kerr resigned from the League. In the Merchant Company, Thomas Russell led a voluntary resistance against approval of the Report as moved by McLaren's lieutenant, James Blackadder: Blackadder's motion was "carried by a large majority".[75] A similar resistance was overcome in the Chamber of Commerce where the majority expressed disappointment with the limitations of the Report "yet in the circumstances, as a compromise, and with a view to restore the peace of the City, the measure . . . should be acceded to".[76] The municipal election of 1851 (to be considered below) was a victory for the moderate Dissenters, led by McLaren, who became the new Lord Provost. In December the new Town Council unanimously supported the city agents' abolition bill based on the Report.[77] Clearly there was a large body of moderate opinion in the city, made up of moderate Dissenters, liberal

Established Churchmen (e.g. the Established Church Town Councillors who voted for the abolition bill) and neutral Free Churchmen anxious to take advantage of the government's initiative and bring to an end the years of bad feeling and rivalry over the old anomaly.

But unfortunately there was another body of conservative opinion in Edinburgh which joined the Established Church Presbytery in condemning the terms of the 1851 Report and the bill based on that Report. The Writers to the Signet, for instance, resolved to oppose the bill for the same reasons as the Presbytery gave in its rejection of the bill.[78] The Solicitors in the Supreme Courts joined with the W.S. in opposing the bill over an amendment of approval by Andrew Fyfe.[79] Before the Faculty of Advocates could join its legal brethren in condemning the bill and demonstrating the split over the annuity tax between the lawyers and the merchants in its most obvious fashion,[80] Parliamentary politics intervened to deflect the course of this annuity tax agitation. For in February, Palmerston's Militia Bill brought the Whigs down in defeat and Lord Derby formed a Tory government. The Edinburgh bill was introduced, but the Tories, after consultations with the Edinburgh Established Church Presbytery's agents, gave notice that 'the Crown would not assent the bill' and it was therefore withdrawn.[81] So ended for the moment any hope of a successful termination to this latest campaign for the reform of the annuity tax.

The Whigs emerged in a favourable light. At first, their reluctance to act upon Lefevre's report had elicited acute discontent among Dissenters. One of the more extreme statements of disappointment came from the Edinburgh News:

> oh, blind, besotted, cold-hearted Whigery! [sic] that has shut the sense of justice from its mind, and substituted in its stead a wretched, time-serving, and soulless expediency. 82

But the Whigs were saved from having to decide whether to support the Town Council bill of 1851, based on the Select Committee Report, which would no doubt have met with stern resistance from the Tories. It is unlikely that the Whigs would have persevered with the bill against such opposition and this could only have aroused great hostility among the Dissenters against the Whigs. One can almost imagine a sigh of relief passing through Parliament House when the onus was passed on to the Tory government and it was ensured that Dissenter resentment would be directed at the Tories and not the Whigs. Meanwhile Gibson-Craig had attended to the wishes of his constituents with admirable solicitude, working so amicably with the Anti-Annuity Tax League that McLaren was moved to commend him generously: "no one could have shown more zeal in the cause than the hon. Baronet had done all through the different negotiations."[83] Although they had not championed the voluntary cause or always moved with the swiftness and directness which the Dissenters desired, the Whigs had managed to deflect the Dissenters' discontent and to appear in a friendlier role than they

had in previous years.

During the entire agitation, the Witness had maintained a portentous silence and neutrality, broken only during the municipal election of 1851, when it described the tax as "unjust, odious, and oppressive" but quoted Sir William Johnston's remark to the Select Committee as an explanation for its own reticence on the annuity tax:

> I have never objected .... to pay the tax, and I do not mean to object; and many feel like myself; for having once been members of the Church, we do not choose to make an objection to the tax, because our motives in doing so might be misunderstood. 84

Not only her motives, but also her aims, might be misunderstood if the Free Church joined the Dissenters in demanding that the legislature should tamper with the income and extent of the Established Church in Edinburgh. The annuity tax was a burden which the Witness endured because it still believed in the right of an established church to draw its financial support from all the citizens; its current objection to the annuity tax lay not in the principle of state support of a national church but in the character of the national church which received it. The liberal Free Church Edinburgh News attacked this attitude from the conviction that the Free Church must now abandon her pro-establishment aspirations and assume an ecclesiastical philosophy more in keeping with her actual position, which was a voluntary one:

> we consider nothing worthy of the name of Dissent that does not rest on Voluntaryism as its foundation. The Free Church of Scotland is not in our view of it a Dissenting Church . . . . In her present militant state, she is still longing after the fleshpots of Egypt. 85

The Edinburgh News in reaction to the Select Committee Report had been even more militantly voluntary than the United Presbyterian Scottish Press which, taking its cue from McLaren, supported the Report; the Edinburgh News dismissed the Report in these terms:

> the legislature must be made aware that the people of Edinburgh will not submit any longer either to the continuance of the present tax, or to the insulting and degrading hocus-pocus which the select committee in their wisdom have proposed as a substitute. 86

This extreme voluntaryism of the Edinburgh News is in stark contrast to the Witness's conservative retention of the establishment principle, and as we shall see below these two newspapers took very different sides in the political conflicts of 1851-1852. The contrast demonstrates again the variety of opinion at this time in the Free Church.

McLaren had been able to maintain more unity among the Dissenters. His victory in the municipal election of 1851 and the continuing moderation of the Anti-Annuity Tax League were both symbols of his successful control of the Dissenter movement. But not many notable Free Churchmen had joined McLaren in the crusade against the annuity tax, and McLaren had not been an active participant in the Free Church's pet projects of sabbatarianism and no-Popery. Increasingly, the Dissenters' voluntaryism

as well as their secular radicalism, were leading them along different paths from those which most Free Churchmen followed. The education and annuity tax issues, and the participation of Dissenter and Free Churchmen in the different associations described in the first part of this chapter, emphasized this divergence over fundamental principles. In 1851-1852 as another general election approached, no issue united the Free Churchmen and Dissenters against the Whigs, and a new and very dangerous personal rivalry between the Free Church and Dissenter leaders for political power exposed and stimulated the old sectarian rivalry and jealousy between the Dissenters and Evangelical party. In the battle between McLaren and Johnston for control of the Liberal party, the two wings of that party -- the Free Church and Dissenter wings -- split apart and the first and most important victim of this division was, of course, the Liberal party itself.

McLaren had volunteered to represent the Town Council in London in the spring of 1851 when the government was ignoring the Lefevre report. In the midst of these negotiations which resulted in the appointment of the Select Committee, McLaren was elected to a seat in the Town Council upon the death of a councillor in the Second District.[87] He was thus brought into an official position from which to oversee the anti-annuity tax operations, and as the three year term of Lord Provost Johnston was due to end in the following autumn, it was plain that McLaren was his most likely successor in the highest municipal office. But as early as

the previous January the Witness had touted the claims of J.F. Macfarlan, the liberal Whig Free Churchman, who had served with McLaren in the first reformed Town Council and who had been active in the Merchant Company and Chamber of Commerce for many years.[88] The Free Church-Dissenter alliance was in danger of falling apart over the rival claims of these two candidates and the appearance of a Tory, Thomas Grainger, a successful civil engineer, "vigorously supported by Conservatives and Churchmen"[89] was an ominous sign that the conservative electors might carry the election over their divided opponents. At some time a kind of deal or arrangement between McLaren and Johnston was mysteriously negotiated which involved Free Church support for McLaren in 1851 in exchange for Dissenter support for the Free Church party in the next general election. The terms upon which the Liberal alliance was salvaged are not clear and the only evidence for such a deal are newspaper hints and the virtual collapse of Free Church resistance to McLaren's candidacy.[90] The Witness continued to support Macfarlan but coverage of the election shrank and the result was scarcely noticed, suggesting that Miller wanted to appear consistent without upsetting the arrangement. The Edinburgh News had always supported McLaren because he was the most likely to bring the current annuity tax agitation to a successful conclusion,[91] and the Dissenter Scottish Press concentrated on the need to maintain the Free Church-Dissenter alliance by quoting Free Churchmen for McLaren, such as a Mr. Johnstone in a

Second District meeting who said:

> he wished to see the body with which he was connected and Dissenters acting more cordially together. And this is a growing sentiment. They are only separated by what is avowedly at present a mere abstract opinion on the part of the adherents of the Free Church -- the theory of an Establishment; and they have far too many interests in common to promote, by cordial co-operation, to allow themselves to be separated by those who wish to speculate on their differences. [92]

Macfarlan's name was not even put into nomination at the first Council meeting after the election and his erstwhile supporters in the Town Council voted for McLaren who defeated the Tory Grainger by twenty votes to ten.[93] McLaren was Lord Provost, the first Dissenter to be elected by the Liberal party which had previously supported the Free Churchmen Cowan and Johnston in addition to the Anglican, Sir Culling Smith. But it was a victory based on a mysterious arrangement which had temporarily patched over cracks which had developed over the years; the Parliamentary election was to show that the reconciliation had not been a true one based on common interests and a full mingling of purpose.

The Parliamentary election of 1852 -- "this most extraordinary of elections which Edinburgh ever witnessed"[94] -- was abnormally complex; and it is difficult to come to definite conclusions about the real motivations and desires of the parties and the voters. Several conclusions may, however, be tentatively drawn. First, Cockburn seems to have been generally accurate in writing:

> on the part of all candidates, except Macaulay, it was chiefly a religious matter. Mr. Charles Cowan and Campbell of Monzie stood upon the Free Church alone; Mr. Duncan McLaren upon the Dissenters; and Mr. Bruce, the Tory, on the Establishment; and with each of these, the religious element was far more powerful than the political. Accordingly there was all the bitterness of religious hostility. 95

But political considerations did play a role in this election, particularly in the decision of the Tories in the afternoon of the election day to support Cowan over McLaren because the former was less radical than the latter, who symbolized, more than anyone else in Edinburgh did, radical Liberalism. Political considerations were influential to some degree too in the alienation of the Free Churchmen like Johnston from the Dissenters. As always in Edinburgh, religion and politics blended together and a dismissal of purely secular political aspects as irrelevant to this election would be unjust. But in the main Cockburn was correct in assigning to religious hostility the prime role in the political struggle.

Another conclusion is that though religious hostility was very bitter, it was a different kind of religious fervour than that which obtained in 1847. In that year it was Maynooth, a definite issue, which inspired opposition; in 1852 the ambition of sectarian parties, latent in 1847, prevailed over particular religious issues as the spur to the parties. Macaulay, the arch-villain of the Maynooth piece, coasted to victory as the anti-Maynoothites fought among themselves. In May 1852, Rev. Begg's fiercely anti-Catholic Bulwark called on all Protestants to sink their sectarian and political

differences in electing a truly Protestant Parliament which would finally withdraw the Maynooth grant;[96] but in August the Bulwark reflected on "the most melancholy thing, probably, in a Protestant point of view, in the recent struggle . . . the return of Mr. Macaulay for Edinburgh, resulting exclusively from the unfortunate divisions amongst Protestants themselves".[97] In 1852 the Free Churchmen and Dissenters both seemed bent on asserting their own leadership of the Liberal alliance; no attempt to reconcile the leadership struggle, no appeal to Protestant solidarity, even after Macaulay had made his audacious entry into the combat, could succeed against the really desparate assertion of sectarian ambition by the Free Churchmen and Dissenters. It seems that the spirit of 1847, the resentment against the Whig establishment, had by 1852 dwindled considerably, and Macaulay was allowed to re-assert the domination of lawyers over a middle class distracted by the counter-claims of the sects. Until the sects had re-defined their leadership over the Liberal party, that party would not be the instrument of anti-establishment forces that it had been in 1847.

By 1852 the Whig establishment was not in such bad odour as it had been in 1847. The Whig M.P., Gibson-Craig, had avoided controversial issues and served his constituents, in the matter of the annuity tax for instance, with commendable attention. The hostility to the Whigs had also decreased in proportion to the increasing tension between the Free Churchmen and Dissenters. While these sectarians grew more critical of each other, criticism

of the Whigs decreased, and those citizens who found the sectarian parties' struggle for more political power distasteful, turned to the Whigs in 1852 as an alternative to the bitter ecclesiastical partizanship. This reaction, which benefited the Whigs enormously, demonstrated once again the still formidable resources of loyalty to the Whigs, a factor in Edinburgh politics which varied in importance but was always present between 1832 and 1852. In 1852 loyalty to the Whigs was reinforced by the lack of embarrassing issues, and by the divisions within the anti-establishment party and the reaction of neutral citizens to these sectarian divisions. In this complicated election particular issues were not nearly as important as the struggle of religious and political groups for political power, and therefore in this analysis, I have concentrated on the relationships of candidates to their parties and the crucial relationship of religious groups to each other. We shall consider first the split in the Liberal alliance, then the Whig and Conservative candidates and finally the result of the voting.

The election was known to be imminent from early April 1852, but it did not actually occur until mid-July. Gibson-Craig announced his retirement (see below) in mid-April. A large public meeting of 14th April was called by McLaren, as Lord Provost, in hopes of establishing a consensus of opinion among all liberals (including the Whigs) with a view towards obtaining a unanimous choice for a liberal successor to Gibson-Craig. Thus McLaren fulfilled, with apparent sincerity, his desire, dating from

the late 1830s, to have open public meetings to decide on prospective candidates for the city representation. Adam Black began by expressing his reluctance to discuss men or issues at this meeting. He recommended the formation of a Whig-Liberal committee to consider a candidate; the only stipulation regarding the committee was that it should be "in favour of Free Trade and liberal principles".[98] William M'Crie, seconding Black, actually condemned the committee as a useless gesture to a unity which did not in fact exist, and with that the meeting started to disintegrate. Thomas Russell argued the electoral prepotence of the independent Liberals, and wondered why a combination with the Whigs was necessary. The meeting then became a rambling discussion of Maynooth, punctuated by raucous audience participation. James Aytoun moved that no candidate should be recommended who did not oppose Maynooth, and Dr. Ritchie moved an amendment calling for a candidate pledged to no endowments to any religious establishments. In the end, the latter amendment was passed, but no committee was actually formed. A subsequent meeting, after protracted discussion, finally did appoint the committee.[99] The committee was able to agree upon Edward Bouverie, a liberal Whig sitting for Kilmarnock,[100] as a replacement for Gibson-Craig, but Bouverie declined the invitation.[101] By that time the political groups had begun to move independently and McLaren's attempt to unite the constituency had failed; he was to find it as difficult to maintain Liberal party unity.

The Dissenters started out with a clear-cut offer to the Free Churchmen, here described by the Scottish Press:

> if they would come forward heartily and agree to support the Lord Provost the Dissenters would with equal cordiality support Mr. Cowan or any other candidate of theirs. . . . Dissatisfied looks, discontented remarks, or downright opposition was the only response . . . . We dwell on these things, not to widen any breach . . . but to show that everything short of political suicide has been done by Dissenters to conciliate. 102

The Edinburgh News had expressed liberal Free Church approval of such a scheme a month previously: "our union has hitherto baffled all opponents. Let that union be strengthened by another link in the shape of a Dissenting member."[103] But, as the Scottish Press reported, there was determined resistance from conservative Free Churchmen to the candidacy of McLaren; hints of this can be found in the Witness's disparagement of the possibility of McLaren standing.[104] One of the causes of the breakdown of the Liberal alliance (which are discussed in more detail below) was antipathy to McLaren. It seems certain that by 1852 former Lord Provost Johnston was motivated by a dislike for McLaren (both as a person and a rival, and for his secular and voluntary radicalism) as well as by keen sectarian ambition, described by the Scottish Press as his "attempt so flagrant to monopolise both seats".[105] Johnston himself was known to have Parliamentary ambitions, but by the spring of 1852, William Gibson-Craig found

> that Sir Wm. Johnston had changed his mind about standing, (as he's apt to do) or rather I suspect he had discovered he would not be so acceptable as he would have been some months ago. Among other follies he has been committing lately, he has been talking in favour of a fixed Duty of 5/- on corn, which of itself puts him out of the field. 106

Nevertheless, in order both to keep McLaren out of Parliament and to realize the potential political power of the Free Churchmen, Johnston brought in a substitute for himself in early June without consultation with the Dissenters. This candidate was the former Tory M.P. for Argyll and very staunch Free Churchman, Alexander Campbell of Monzie.[107]

Campbell was at considerable pains to excuse his Tory past by appealing to his early votes for free trade, and now as a moderate Whig he expressed support for some Parliamentary reform, but was against household or universal suffrage and triennial Parliaments. Mildly sabbatarian, and believing that national education schemes must include religious training, he was reported to confess that "I am not a voluntary, and I am in certain circumstances in favour of endowments for religious purposes".[108] Like McLaren and Cowan he stood behind the Select Committee Report on the annuity tax and was adamantly against Maynooth. With the Witness's enthusiastic support,[109] Campbell was the darling of the conservative Free Churchmen, but the Dissenters were infuriated with Johnston's arrogant assumption that such a conservative candidate brought forward in such a high-handed manner automatically

deserved the support of the entire Liberal party. To this challenge there was only one answer -- the candidacy of McLaren.

The Dissenters had wanted McLaren to stand for Parliament ever since 1839, but he had always declined for personal financial reasons, and because he could not count on sufficient support to make the contest worthwhile.[110] In this election of 1852, however, with the Free Church attempting to dominate the Liberal party, McLaren was apparently persuaded that he must stand whatever the personal or party consequences. After accepting a subordinate role in the Liberal alliance since its formation in 1846, the Dissenters were anxious to obtain an equal footing with the Free Churchmen. When the Free Church appeared intent on forever denying the Dissenters their due influence in the Liberal alliance and put forward a typical conservative Free Churchman as their candidate, the Dissenters could not be restrained from withdrawing their support from the Free Church party and practical, sensible Duncan McLaren could no longer resist the demands of his supporters. In any case, his chances of election were certainly not bad since he could count on the Dissenters, liberal Free Churchmen and probably some liberal Whigs as well. Accordingly McLaren accepted the nomination of his Dissenter committee on 10th June.[111] In his speech, McLaren hoped that he might be able to represent all Liberals and not just the Dissenters. But in emphasizing his voluntaryism, by reviewing the recent struggle against the annuity tax, and by dwelling upon his desire for radical

franchise reform, McLaren demonstrated those aspects of his candidacy which were least likely to appeal to the Free Churchmen. Cowan completed the destruction of the Liberal alliance by returning to Edinburgh in late June to join the Johnstonite wing of the Liberal party; he thereby ceased to be the "connecting link to unite the Free Church and Dissenters".[112] On 28th June he appeared with Johnston at the Music Hall where he condemned Maynooth and avoided the voluntary issue while supporting in principle Hume's Parliamentary reform plans.[113] He thus gave evidence of a secular liberalism which might have appealed to the Dissenters, but in 1852 it was the religious company he kept which determined his electoral support.

Seeing disunion all about them, the Conservatives were sufficiently encouraged to bring forth Thomas Bruce, brother of the Earl of Elgin -- "thoroughly Conservative and throughly Protestant"[114] -- a supporter of Lord Derby in favour of free trade.[115] Unfortunately I have found no MS evidence regarding Tory party plans at this time. Bruce's candidacy appears to have been offered in hopes of taking advantage of the confusion among the Whigs and Liberals. At the other extreme, Professor Dick declared his candidacy on 3rd July and was nominated, but withdrew before voting began.[116] He regarded no candidate, not even McLaren, as sufficiently voluntary and used his nomination as an opportunity to demand disestablishment. There is no evidence of any popular support for Dick. Most Dissenters

appear to have remained faithful to McLaren, whose practical attempts to reform if not abolish the annuity tax in previous years had dissatisfied only a minority of the Dissenters.

Gibson-Craig's retirement, due to ill-health,[117] left the Whigs in complete confusion as to a successor. The extant correspondence of the Whigs at this time reads like a catalogue of liberal Whigs, all mentioned as possibilities for Gibson-Craig's job. Apart from the difficulties of finding someone whose religious and political principles suited the constituency,[118] the Whigs themselves seemed to lack any clear idea of what kind of candidate they really wanted; nor was there any one in the party in clear control of the situation, as Sheriff Gordon explained to Rutherfurd:

> everything is loose. . . . The condition of the Parliament House party never was worse -- being certainly without any mastermind -- and, as it seems to me, without an authoritarian adviser, or a strong-handed steersman. 119

Adam Black tried to get Lord John Russell to stand, but he was committed to the City of London.[120] George Combe tried to get Lord Melgund, but Melgund was hesitant, many Whigs like Gibson-Craig were apprehensive about his views on education and some Free Church Whigs still resented Melgund's defeat of the Free Church Whig, A. Murray Dunlop, in Greenock in 1847.[121] Combe also promoted an alliance of the Whigs with the Dissenters by offering Melgund and McLaren as their joint-candidates. This met with a cool reception from Black, Gibson-Craig and Russel of the Scotsman who doubted whether the Whig electors would vote

for McLaren, and who no doubt had private reservations too about adopting their old enemy.[122] Time ran out on Combe and his suggestion was dropped when the Whigs were rescued from their confusion by a striking suggestion from Adam Black: re-elect Macaulay.

The idea was first suggested to Black by Peter Howden, one of the leaders of the Excise Association of 1847, who had 'returned to his first love', as he described it when he seconded the nomination of Macaulay at a Liberal Aggregate Committee meeting some weeks later.[123] In the years since 1847 the spirit merchants had apparently swung back to regarding the Whigs as the best guardians of their interests. In late May, Russel wrote E. Ellice, Jr. of the suggestion to nominate Macaulay, who would be under no obligation to campaign for his election: "this as yet is only Black's idea, and its reception in the committee remains to be seen".[124] By early June the Whig district committees were making discreet inquiries and assessing the climate of opinion so, said Sir William Gibson-Craig, "that we shall soon know whether it will be safe to start him".[125] Russel, who had been dubious about the wisdom of this course, reported later:

> I was in the end thoroughly converted to the policy of starting Macaulay, principally from hearing the reports of the district conveners and canvassers. They reported that there existed a strong feeling to retrieve 1847 by returning Macaulay. 126

Encouraged by these reports, the Whig leaders decided to risk it

and on 14th June Adam Black as chairman of the Liberal Aggregate Committee eloquently appealed for the restoration of Edinburgh's reputation as an enlightened constituency by re-electing the great Whig:

> will you rob the British Senate of one of its brightest ornaments? Will you deprive Edinburgh of the honour of association with one of the most illustrious men of the day? Will you silence that voice whose tones would sustain the sinking spirits of the friends of constitutional liberty in Europe? 127

The Whig Committee unanimously agreed to work for Macaulay's election. No pledges were sought from him, he was not even required to appear in Edinburgh; it was to be a magnanimous demonstration of restored confidence in the great man.

What was Macaulay's part in this? In 1847 he had written that "under no circumstances will I ever again be a candidate for Edinburgh".[128] His resolution was only shaken when the Whig Committee offered him the nomination on such unique terms. He must have been naturally reluctant to embroil himself again in the sultry politics of Edinburgh, but he could hardly say no to such a generous offer from the party to which he owed much. To J. Hill Burton, he wrote:

> the sacrifice will be painful; and yet I must be a very insensible person if I were not gratified by a distinction which, all the circumstances considered, I believe to be unprecedented. 129

He approached it all with a weary resignation, best expressed in

a letter to the Scottish Reformation Society when it wrote asking his views on Maynooth:

> I must beg to be excused from answering the questions which you put to me. I have great respect for the gentlemen in whose name you write, but I have nothing to ask of them; I am not a candidate for their suffrages, I have no desire to sit again in Parliament, and I certainly shall never again sit there, except in an event which I did not till very lately contemplate as possible, and which even now seems to me highly improbable. If, indeed, the electors of such a city as Edinburgh should, without requiring from me any explanation or any guarantee, think fit to confide their interests to my care, I should not feel myself justified in refusing to accept a public trust offered me in a manner so honourable and so peculiar. I have not, I am sensible, the smallest right to expect that I shall on such terms be chosen to represent a great constituent body; but I have a right to say that on no other terms can I be be induced to leave that quiet and happy retirement in which I have passed the last four years. 130

In contrast to Macaulay, the other candidates were extremely active, especially in holding many meetings. The committees of the candidates appear to have been unusually vigorous; the Edinburgh Advertiser claimed the canvass "was the keenest which Edinburgh has ever witnessed".[131] Indeed old Lord Dunfermline wrote that the campaign "made me fancy that I had been carried back to the year 1793. They did not express themselves with the warm violence of that day, but the spirit was the same".[132]

The result of all this activity was known at the close of the polls on 13th July: Macaulay -- 1,872; Cowan -- 1,754; McLaren -- 1,559; Bruce -- 1,065; and Campbell -- 625.[133] For the second time in as many elections Cowan was the beneficiary

of Tory aid. It was no secret that a large number of Tories withheld their votes until the middle of the afternoon when they met and decided to plump for Cowan or split their votes between him and Bruce.[134] McLaren, who was running second to Macaulay, thereupon lost his close lead over Cowan and was deprived of victory by Conservatives who preferred a weak Free Churchman to a capable Dissenter.. Campbell apparently received the votes of the die-hard Free Churchmen while Cowan had a broader base of support including over 500 split votes with Macaulay, the expression perhaps, of Whigs who wanted to deprive McLaren of victory. The low number of split votes between Cowan and McLaren -- approximately 230 -- show how the Liberal alliance had indeed collapsed. Geographically, except for the Tory, Bruce, the vote was fairly evenly distributed throughout the constituency. McLaren's support was slightly stronger in the Old Town, but Macaulay's support was spread extremely evenly over the entire city.

Indeed, the really remarkable result was the massiveness of Macaulay's victory. For unlike Cowan, his success was not dependent on the passing favour of erstwhile enemies. In every district in Old and New Town alike he received very substantial numbers of votes, collecting many more votes than in 1847. His triumph was reminiscent of his success in 1839 and of course happily effaced the memory of 1847. What had happened in the interval which led to such a surprising reversal of Macaulay's fortune with the Edinburgh electorate? When Macaulay's candidacy was

announced the first reaction was in many cases incredulous awe. To the Scottish Press "it is sheer madness";[135] while the Edinburgh Advertiser said "his election is simply impossible".[136] The manner of Macaulay's acceptance of the nomination as well as his refusal to commit himself to any policies met with the infuriation that, given the immediate past history of Edinburgh, one would anticipate. An anonymous pamphleteer wrote:

> there is such an arrogant assumption of superiority, such a lofty contempt for all which has generally, hitherto, been understood as the relative position of electors and candidates, as strikes one with utter amazement. [137]

There was no reason to believe that Macaulay had changed any of his unpopular opinions on such issues as Maynooth. He remained potentially the same vulnerable, provoking symbol of Whig domination. Yet this scapegoat of Whiggery in 1847 came top of the poll in 1852, and the explanation seems to lie in an intangible but definite shift in electoral opinion in reaction to the sectarian Liberals. It is extremely difficult to document such a shift of opinion but one can point to indicators, such as newspapers and contemporary opinions, which appear to reflect the mood of the moment and suggest the intangible factors which account for Macaulay's victory.

Macaulay had, of course, the solid support of the Whig party which had given him over 1,400 votes in 1847. Both the Roman Catholics and the spirit merchants supported him in 1852,[138] but there was in addition a large group of voters for whom the

Caledonian Mercury spoke. The machinations of the Free Churchmen and Dissenters in April and May

> has had the effect of arousing the indignant feeling of the great body of the electors who do not come under either of those denominations, and the opposition of not a few who do, but who cannot be brought thus to identify their religious opinions with the politics of the State. . . . Those of the electors . . . who scorn the politico-ecclesiastical thralldom threatened, are resolving that, come what may they will not succumb. The independence of the city . . . is becoming the primary consideration, and to this end, if we may judge by the feeling abroad, the various political parties will rather unite and swamp their differences for the time, than submit to be thus enthralled through their own divisions. 139

A friend of George Combe's, James Simpson, wrote in early June to Lord Melgund that Maynooth had lost much of its old power and that among many voters "there is a decided wish to resist these religious influences".[140] The Caledonian Mercury mentioned another factor at work -- the desire for

> some distinguished man. . . . It is only by singling out one, and, if possible, two candidates of mark and talent that the city of Edinburgh can expect to hold its proper place in the great political arena, and not to sink into the grade of an ordinary provincial town. 141

James Simpson wrote that the reaction to sectarian politics and the desire for a distinguished man were, indeed, very influential factors in this election:

> with a great portion of the more respectable electors a strong feeling exists as to securing members of high character and position, without reference to political principles at all. These are strongly opposed to the predominance either of the Free Churchmen or the voluntary party. 142

In the years since 1847 many electors who had voted against Macaulay then seem to have reacted against the sectarian approach to politics, to have decided that the distinguished character of their representative was more important than his ability to represent the local interests, and to have determined that a reversal of the 1847 election was the best way of demonstrating their change of heart and mind. The extent of the wish to expiate the shameful rejection of the grand Whig in 1847 seems to have caught even the Whig leaders by surprise. The thought of recalling Macaulay had not occurred to them until suggested by one of those voters whose opinions had undergone a radical reversal since 1847. And it was only after consulting their canvassers and committee men that the Whig leaders discovered that throughout the constituency there was what Russel described as "an exciting enthusiasm for Mr. Macaulay, a yearning to revenge 1847".[143] It is probably true that no other Whig would have been able to succeed as completely as Macaulay in this election, for he was especially able to arouse the latent reaction of many voters to the militant Protestant partizans who had defeated him in 1847. The victim of the vendetta had a peculiarly effective role in leading the rebellion against his former tormentors. He had revived the spirits of the 'respectable electors' who had voted for him in 1847, and he attracted a significant number of other voters who had become, for various reasons, discontented with the Dissenter-Free Church alliance's political aims and methods. Issues had sunk into

insignificance; what mattered in this election was a complex mood of disgust with the Liberals coupled with a desire to express this disgust by reversing the initial Liberal victory. As the Edinburgh Courant said:

> Mr. Macaulay was chosen less for his opinions upon the vexed questions of the hour than in spite of them. Objections to the party politician were lost in the effulgence of his renown as a statesman and orator, a poet and historian. The Scottish capital has neither recorded its approbation of Maynooth, nor expressed its condemnation of theEcclesiastical Titles Bill, although it has declared by a majority of its electors, that in the case of such a man as Mr. Macaulay, these are not insuperable barriers to its confidence. 144

Macaulay's virtues had this time outshone his vices, and to some extent this had been possible b ecause the Liberals pursued the disastrous policy of exposing each other's sins rather than calling attention to Macaulay's faults. The breakdown of the Liberal alliance was the result of several jealousies and fundamental differences. There was for instance the problem of voluntaryism. The liberal minority of Free Churchmen represented by the Edinburgh News notwithstanding, the basic conflict over the establishment principle imposed a heavy strain upon any alliance of the FreeChurch and Dissenter groups. Perhaps more than any other issue, the state church problem defined the split between these two groups; and as we have seen, it was apt to reappear frequently in various guises -- Maynooth, papal aggression, the annuity tax -- to remind the Liberal alliance of its very considerable internal division. There was also the strain resulting from the divergence

of the Free Church and Dissenter parties over their secular goals, as illustrated by the proliferation of separate pressure groups described at the beginning of this chapter. These strains had weakened the alliance a great deal by 1852, as the Caledonian Mercury explained:

> those belonging to the Free Church, for example, seem already wearied of the alliance with the Voluntary Dissenters . . . with the Lord Provost and those holding his extreme views . . . . the Voluntary Dissenters would drag the Free Church after them in their democratic career. 145

This ideological dichotomy in the Liberal alliance was symbolized in the two leaders of the two sectarian groups -- McLaren, the radical voluntary, and Johnston, the conservative Free Churchman who clung to the establishment theory. In addition to their differences over principles, the two men appear to have clashed personally. The Scottish Press attributed Johnston's rebellion to "personal dislike . . . [and] paltry jealousy"[146] of McLaren by Johnston; and the Edinburgh News regarded Johnston's bitter disappointment at failing to find sufficient support for his own candidacy as the root of his jealousy for McLaren.[147] Their hostility was also a personification of the rivalry between the two sects for political power. By 1852, the Dissenters who had usually been the junior partners from 1847, were no longer willing subordinates. McLaren declared that

> the intolerance of the Free Church leaders and their hostility to me is very great. They know that I have

a will of my own and will not be an instrument in their hands for any purposes whatever. 148

On the other hand, McLaren's victory in 1851 and the Dissenters' desire to see him one of Edinburgh's M.P.s had made the Free Churchmen envious, according to the Edinburgh Advertiser: "the Free Church party . . . feel rather sore at the subordinate place which they have been compelled to hold in the triumphal march of their astute allies'."[149] This rivalry was complicated by the confusion over the terms of the putative deal of 1851 which had resulted in Free Church support for McLaren's bid for the Lord Provostship. Since there is no evidence regarding the terms of this arrangement, it is impossible to say which party deceived the other; but probably the unexpected retirement of Gibson-Craig caused a confusion in which personal jealousies flourished. Both Dissenters and Free Churchmen apparently felt aggrieved at the other's conduct, and in this atmosphere of mistrust, sectarian ambition raged unchecked. Militant Protestants, having combined in 1847 to defeat the neutral Whig whose toleration of Popery, and indifference to religious issues threatened the very security of the nation, now appeared to apprehend greater dangers in the domination of one sect over another. Ecclesiastical factionalism had undermined the Liberal alliance and party jealousy had superseded former common interests. The victory of 1847 had never resulted in a true mingling of purpose and principle in the Liberal alliance, and the trend towards disunity caused by contradictory religious and

political impulses, antagonistic personalities and sectarian pride was virtually unopposed by 1852. Thus, the conservative reaction to Macaulay's defeat spread through the electorate unchecked by a return to the stern solidarity of 1847. Indeed, if anything, the reaction was encouraged by the spectacle of Liberals fighting among themselves, for the most worldly political ends.

The anti-establishment Liberal party of 1847 was no more. The Free Church-Dissenter alliance had disintegrated into its separate units. The Edinburgh News offered a cold obituary for the Liberal alliance:

> that union produced some premature blossoms, but liberty is likely to lose more than it has gained unless its disciples keep watch and ward over sectarian cabals whom temporary success has maddened with a thirst for unrestricted and illimitable power. 150

While the thirst of Liberal leaders for power over their Liberal allies had made them forget their old antagonism towards the establishment Whigs, it is also true that the socio-political establishment of Edinburgh was not apparently standing in the way of the aspirations of Edinburgh's middle class as it had appeared to be in the 1840s. In the years before 1847, Macaulay's position on free trade and Maynooth stimulated the middle class radicals to oppose him as an establishment figure. Once he was defeated, the Liberals lost a useful target for anti-establishment attack, and there was a lack of issues such as free trade to arouse opposition. Anti-Catholicism subsided a good deal and when it returned in the

outcry against papal aggression the Whigs reacted with sufficient vigour to satisfy most Liberals. Deprived therefore of provocative issues and obvious targets which united all Liberals, individual Liberals pursued their various goals, and in the years between 1847 and 1852 the different units which constituted the Liberal party drifted apart. Tension built up between Free Churchmen and Dissenters and as the election of 1852 approached, sectarian ambition played upon ideological differences, resulting in a nasty rivalry which disgusted many neutral voters. Finally the entry of Macaulay at the last moment revived the confidence and spirit of the establishment party but came too late to distract the anti-establishment party from its internecine conflict. Thus a combination of circumstances had led to the blunting of the anti-establishment feeling of 1847; the middle class radicals who had worked for the downfall of the Whigs in 1847 had apparently become too concerned with jealousies and divisions within their own ranks to be able to unite once again to defeat the resurrected establishment figure.

But out of this débâcle there still survived a kind of Edinburgh Liberalism. For among McLaren's mainly Dissenter supporters there was still a common political philosophy and set of aims such as disestablishment and further Parliamentary reform. And in the confusion of 1852 when the conservative Free Church opted out of the Liberal party, they left behind them a smaller and more closely knit party. McLaren's Liberal party after 1852 was no

longer the creaking amalgamation of 1847; its principles and goals were clear-cut and there was no more need to compromise to keep a clumsy alliance together. Hence, the election of 1852 purified the Liberal party, leaving McLaren in sole control. But it would not be until the mid-1860s that McLaren's leadership and principles came to appeal to a majority of Edinburgh's electors. For thirteen long years after 1852, moderation would prevail in Edinburgh. Only the new issues, personalities and electors that arose in the mid-sixties would rescue McLaren and the Liberals from the obscurity and impotency into which the disastrous election had thrown them and enable them to accomplish the final overthrow of the Edinburgh Whigs.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

1. Cowan, Newspaper in Scotland, p. 283. Although the News supported the Dissenter party consistently, it did occasionally show signs of resentment with the dominance of the McLaren group of Dissenters over the voluntary movement in Edinburgh (see edition of 15th February 1851 for an example of this). Thus, the News retained its Free Church identity while expressing opinions which were anathema to many Free Churchmen.

2. Colston, Approaching General Election, p. 24; Edinburgh News, 7th October 1848; Witness, 1st November 1848.

3. I have found no evidence regarding the choice of Johnston for this position nor of McLaren's part in this.

4. See F.E. Gillespie, Labor and Politics in England, 1850-1867, 2nd ed. (London, 1966), pp. 84-85.

5. Scotsman, 30th December 1848.

6. Cowan spoke against the income tax in the December meeting. The Witness (17th January 1849) supported the Association's ideals and noted approvingly the political and religious variety of its membership, while the Edinburgh News (25th November 1848) was even more enthusiastic from the Association's formation. See also Merchant Company Minute Book No.14, 29th January 1849, and Chamber of Commerce Minute Book No.5, 2nd January 1849.

7. Tract No. IV, an analysis of the national budget, survives in the NLS. Its title page as well as the preceding three tracts are missing and it contains no information about the Association. The pamphlet is an exposition of national expenditure with the theme that "the grand cause of financial pressure is the colonial system" (p. 24); it does not include any plan for action or protest.

8. See, for instance, Scotsman, 24th March and 16th June 1849.

9. For the national progress of the National Parliamentary and Financial Reform Association, see Gillespie, Labor and Politics, Chapter Three.

10. Scotsman, 21st November 1849. The only ministers present were all United Presbyterian or Congregational and included Dr. W. Peddie and Dr. Ritchie.

11. Witness, 21st November 1849; Edinburgh News, 24th November 1849.

12. Edinburgh League of Universal Brotherhood, First Annual Report (Edinburgh, 1848), p. 6.

13. Ibid., p. 8.

14. Edinburgh League of Universal Brotherhood, Second Annual Report (Edinburgh, 1849), p.8.

15. Edinburgh News, 8th March 1851.

16. Second Annual Report, p. 7.

17. First Annual Report, p.7.

18. Second Annual Report, p.12.

19. I have found no other annual reports for the following years.

20. Scotsman, 3rd August 1850.

21. For details, see Report of the Proceedings of the Peace Conference at Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1853) which includes the speeches of the chairman, Duncan McLaren, and Sturge, Bright, Cobden and Miall among others.

22. For a typical meeting, see report in Scotsman, 26th February 1851.

23. Scotsman, 17th January 1852.

24. Edinburgh Advertiser, 30th January 1852.

25. For details, see Wright, Scottish Chartism, p. 185 ff., and Wilson, The Chartist Movement in Scotland, Vol. II, passim.

For the trial, see Cockburn, Examination of the Trials for Sedition, Vol. II, Chapters XXIV and XXV.

26. Scotsman, 12th April 1848. The opposition was led by Lord Provost Black whose successful amendment maintained "that, in the opinion of this Council, the adoption of the system of Government which has been called the People's Charter, would alarm the holders of capital, endanger the safety of property, and prove injurious to the working classes".

27. For the People's League, see Gillespie, Labor and Politics, pp. 67-68.

28. See those reported in Scotsman, 22nd April and 14th June 1848.

29. From resolutions of 21st April meeting, reported in Scotsman, 22nd April 1848.

30. Presbytery minutes of the 1840s and 1850s are littered with sabbatarian resolutions. For examples see Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/22, 31st March 1841 and CH 2/121/23, 29th April 1846 and CH 2/121/25, 24th February 1858; Free Church Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/25, 7th February 1844 and 10th May 1848 and CH 3/111/27, 6th February 1856; United Secession Church Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/24, 2nd November 1841 and 1st June 1846; Relief Church Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/16, 26th October 1841; United Presbyterian Church Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/32, 4th December 1849 and CH 3/111/33, 7th February 1860. The Merchant Company and Chamber of Commerce registered their opposition to Sunday labour in the post office in similar fashion (see Merchant Company Minute Book No.14, 23rd October 1849, and Chamber of Commerce Minute Book No.5, 12th October 1849).

31. One exception to this general rule was Dr. John Brown, the

31. (cont'd)

Dissenter minister who "did not regard it as the business of a church court to protest specifically against this evil, save in the case of those under its jurisdiction, any more than against a multitude of other sins committed by public bodies" (Cairns, Brown, p. 272). In the United Secession Presbytery, Brown went to the lengths of opposing a memorial to the proprietors of the Edinburgh-Glasgow Railway Company's Sunday trains (see Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/24, 15th February 1847). The liberal Dr. Robert Lee objected to sabbatarian resolutions in the Established Church Presbytery (see Story, Lee, Vol. I, p. 129).

32. See Scottish Society for Promoting the Due Observance of the Lord's Day, Report of the General Meeting (Edinburgh, 1839) and First Annual Report (Edinburgh, 1840) for the leadership of Cunningham, Candlish, Guthrie, George Lyon, A. Murray Dunlop, R.K. Greville, Charles Cowan, etc. One of the few Dissenters among the directors was Hugh Rose, one of McLaren's political lieutenants in the 1850s.

33. For details, see R.K. Greville, The Sabbath Alliance (Edinburgh, 1848), Sabbath Alliance of Scotland, First Annual Report (Edinburgh,1849) and Narrative of the Proceedings of the Sabbath Alliance for the Years 1849 and 1850 (Edinburgh, 1851). By 1848, the Alliance had a budget of well over £1,000, of which almost £500 was spent on printing expenses and £400 on salaries

33. (cont'd)

of two secretaries and a clerk. Edinburgh appears to have been a stronger centre of sabbatarian feeling than Glasgow was: in 1850, petitions to Parliament from Edinburgh yielded 24,000 signatures to Glasgow's 22,000.

34. The intervention of papal aggression was the excuse given for abandoning a national petition against Sabbath labour in the post office (Narrative of the Proceedings, pp. 35-36). The shift to no-Popery activities is probably reflected in the drop in the budget from about £1,300 in 1848-1849 to approximately £1,000 in 1849-1850 (ibid., p. 47).

35. For an account of the activities of the Society, see Jamie, Hope, Chapters X and XII.

36. See Edinburgh Irish Mission, The True Way of Dealing Successfully with Popery; Being the Report of the Edinburgh Irish Mission for the Year 1850 (Edinburgh, 1851) and Annual Report (Edinburgh, 1852).

37. United Presbyterian Church Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 3/111/32, 7th January 1851.

38. Scotsman, 20th November 1850.

39. Scotsman, 4th December 1850.

40. Scotsman, 21st December 1850.

41. Scottish Press, 21st December 1850.

42. Edinburgh News, 21st December 1850.

43. Scotsman, 15th February 1851.

44. Witness, 25th December 1850. The Witness was adhering to the strong position of Dr. Candlish here, who, as was shown in his pamphlet exchange with Dr. Heugh, described in Chapter Four above, spoke for the majority of Free Churchmen in maintaining the legitimacy and divine efficacy of an established church.

45. Edinburgh News, 15th February 1851.

46. Scotsman, 7th December 1850; Jamie, Hope, p. 75.

47. See Withrington, "Free Church Educational Scheme" for a full discussion of the divisions of opinion within the Free Church over education.

48. United Presbyterian Magazine, Decemb er 1852, p. 570.

49. Memorandum (24th J anuary 1851): PRO, Home Office MS O. S. 3972.

50. Letter (14th May 1850) from Rutherfurd to Grey: PRO, Home Office MS O. S. 3193.

51. For details of the auction disturbance in which 140 uniformed and twenty plainclothes policemen as well as a troop of dragoons could not prevent the auctioneer from being assaulted, see the superintendent of police's report to the sheriff in SRO, Lord Advocates' MS AD 58/65.

52. J.G. Shaw Lefevre (1797-1879), younger brother of C. Shaw Lefevre, speaker of the House of Commons from 1839 to 1857, was an English lawyer who served on various government boards and commissions including the Poor Law Commission, Emigration Commission, Board of Trade and Ecclesiastical Commission. He was never successful in his attempts to enter Parliament (DNB, Vol. XVII, pp. 1389-1390).

53. Edinburgh News, 12th May 1849.

54. See Report on the Edinburgh Annuity Tax and Scotsman, 9th May 1849.

55. Scotsman, 22nd May 1850.

56. Edinburgh News, 25th May 1850. The Scottish Press referred to the report as "miserable, huxtering . . . not less insulting to the intelligence of Dissenters than it is regardless of their principles" (29th May 1850).

57. Letter (6th July 1850): PRO, Home Office MS O.S. 3193.

58. For details, see evidence of Archibald Kerr in Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax, p. 199 ff. See also Address to the Inhabitants of Edinburgh by the Executive Committee of the Anti-Annuity Tax League (Edinburgh, 1850): "whatever were the individual views of the members of the Association, they were not associated to obtain the separation of the Established Church in Edinburgh from the State . . . their simple object was to procure

58. (cont'd)

the removal of the Annuity Tax" (pp. 4-5). There are no extant records of the League and Kerr avoided answering direct questions about the membership, etc. of the League when giving evidence before the Select Committee.

59. Scotsman, 16th October 1850.

60. See Address . . . of the Anti-Annuity Tax League, pp. 11-17. In order to finance this ambitious programme of meetings, deputations, etc.,"the Committee, therefore, earnestly call upon every friend of the movement to contribute towards the means of defraying the expense. They propose that a sum of £500 be forthwith subscribed" (pp. 16-17). The League asked friends to contribute the same sum as they paid in annuity tax.

61. Scottish Press, 19th October 1850; see also Edinburgh News, 19th October 1850.

62. Letter (14th May 1850): PRO, Home Office MS O.S. 3193.

63. The mood of the Town Council was summed up by Treasurer Wemyss when he complained that "the Annuity Tax was just . . . like an eternal toothache, which they were never to get rid of" (Scotsman, 26th February 1851).

64. Scotsman, 30th April 1851.

65. Scotsman, 10th May 1851.

66. See minutes of evidence given in Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax.

67. Scotsman, 9th August 1851.

68. See the Scottish Press's judgement of 6th August 1851 on the Report as "not by any means what it could have been wished, but the best attainable". The United Presbyterian Magazine of November 1851 agreed that "it is a compromise, and as such, it demands a spirit of forbearance from all parties" (p. 527). The Town Council unanimously approved the Report although a few Established Churchmen and Dissenters were not present to vote (Scotsman, 6th August 1851).

69. Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/24, 12th August 1851.

70. Edinburgh Advertiser, 15th August 1851.

71. See memorials from such far-flung places as Dundee, Dingwall, Nairn, Glasgow and Kirkcudbright in Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery Minutes: SRO, CH 2/121/24, 24th September, 29th October and 31st December 1851.

72. Scotsman, 20th August 1851.

73. Scotsman, 23rd September 1851.

74. Scotsman, 27th August 1851.

75. Merchant Company Minute Book No.14, 20th October 1851.

76. Chamber of Commerce Minute Book No.5, 1st October 1851.

77. Scotsman, 17th December 1851.

78. W.S. Sederunt Vol. 9, 17th November 1851 and 2nd February 1852. Until the publication of the Select Committee Report the legal societies had taken no notice of the current anti-annuity tax agitation.

79. S.S.C. Sederunt Book No.2, 1st December 1851 and 15th January 1852.

80. In late March the Faculty of Advocates took a conservative stand, agreeing with the Established Church Presbytery that the number of ministers should not be reduced to less than eighteen ministers, nor their salaries to less than £600, and that seat-rents were not dependable enough as a major source of income. After various liberal Whig advocates, such as J. Hill Burton and Archibald Davidson, tried unsuccessfully to persuade their associates that a more encouraging response to the Report was in order even if aspects of the Report were unsatisfactory, the majority of the Faculty declared without giving any hopes for negotiation that "the Bill before them, taken solely on its own merits, ought not to meet with the approbation or sanction of the Faculty, and that the Faculty should consequently decline to waive their privileges" (Faculty Minutes Vol. VIII, 24th March 1852 and Faculty Reports, Vol. V, p. 13).

81. Scotsman, 7th April 1852.

82. Edinburgh News, 22nd February 1851.

83. Quoted in Scotsman, 31st March 1852.

84. Report from the Select Committee on Annuity Tax, p.8; Witness, 25th October 1851.

85. Edinburgh News, 7th August 1852.

86. Edinburgh News, 26th July 1851.

87. Scotsman, 25th June 1851.

88. Witness, 15th January 1851.

89. D. Dickson, unpaginated autobiographical writings in EPL. The Edinburgh News (25th October 1851) hinted that some Whig Churchmen were supporting Grainger who had stood unsuccessfully for Lord Provost in 1840 in similar circumstances (see Chapter Four above).

90. For newspaper hints, see Caledonian Mercury, 6th November 1851; Edinburgh Advertiser, 7th November 1851; and Scotsman, 29th October 1851. There is no hint of this in Mackie's McLaren. The Edinburgh Advertiser predicted that McLaren and the Free Churchman and former M.P. for Greenock, A. Murray Dunlop, would stand in the Liberal interest in the next general election (11th November 1851).

91. See, for example, Edinburgh News, 20th September 1851.

92. Scottish Press, 25th October 1851.

93. Scotsman, 8th November 1851.

94. Edinburgh Advertiser, 13th July 1852.

95. Cockburn, Journal, Vol. II, p. 284.

96. Bulwark, May 1852, pp. 275-278.

97. Bulwark, August 1852, p. 29.

98. Scotsman, 17th April 1852.

99. Scotsman, 5th May 1852.

100. Bouverie (1818-1889), second son of the third Earl of Radnor, was a Cambridge graduate and an English lawyer who represented Kilmarnock from 1844 until 1874. He was a protégé of Palmerston, holding minor ministerial positions throughout the 1850s, and a conservative Whig by the 1870s when he bitterly attacked Gladstone for his policy on the Irish Church (DNB, Vol. XV, pp. 1309-1310).

101. It is unlikely that Bouverie was meant to be anything more than a stop-gap. Alexander Russel of the Scotsman reported that the Dissenters were not enthusiastic for him (see letter (12th June 1852) to Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 135.2); and George Combe, one of the Whigs on the Whig-Liberal committee, reported to Melgund that Bouverie was accepted by the Whigs "to show their earnest desire for conciliation; and perhaps we have gone too far, for the endowment Whigs are already manifesting dissatisfaction" (letter (7th May 1852): NLS, Minto MS 135.2). Bouverie was not a voluntary but he had taken a liberal position on annuity tax reform

101. (cont'd)

as a member of the Select Committee.

102. Scottish Press, 12th May 1852.

103. Edinburgh News, 17th April 1852.

104. See, for example, Witness, 12th May 1852.

105. Scottish Press, 2nd June 1852.

106. Letter (10th April 1852) to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS Adv. MS 85.1.5. And Alexander Russel wrote E. Ellice, Jr. that Johnston was "feeble and uncertain" (letter (14th May 1852): NLS, Ellice MS E 46, f. 8).

107. Campbell (1811-1869) was one of the chief non-Intrusionist M.P.s prior to the disruption, and distinguished himself in 1843 by walking arm in arm with Dr. Chalmers on the famous walk from George St. to Tanfield. A Peelite who supported the ballot, Campbell abandoned politics in 1843 to participate in the establishment of the Sustenation Fund of the Free Church and was also active in the Evangelical Alliance. He was a keen sportsman and accompanied Prince Albert on many deer-stalking adventures in the Highlands (Rev. J. Wylie, Disruption Worthies, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1881), Vol. I, p. 125 ff.).

108. Scotsman, 9th June 1852.

109. Witness, 3rd June 1852.

110. See Mackie, McLaren, Vol. II, p. 27. McLaren's financial reasons for not seeking election seem quite genuine. In the spring of 1852 he had written a voluntary friend, J.B. Smith, about the possibility of standing for Parliament: "I really cannot afford it. No consideration would induce me to live in London apart from my family; and according to my calculations I could not get a furnished house in London suitable for us and pay the additional expense of being there and of moving the family and servants up and down under £500 extra for the six months, over and above whatever expenses would be in Edinburgh" (letter (19th April 1852): Manchester Reference Library MS 923.94).

111. Scotsman, 16th June 1852.

112. Scottish Press, 12th May 1852.

113. Scotsman, 30th June 1852.

114. Edinburgh Advertiser, 29th June 1852.

115. Scotsman, 30th June 1852.

116. Scotsman, 3rd and 14th July 1852.

117. A. Davidson wrote to Gibson-Craig that "being out of the yoke, I am confident you will soon be convalescent" (letter (16th April 1852): SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/11).

118. For instance Gibson-Craig wanted Sir David Dundas to stand, but the critical tone which Dundas had maintained against the Dissenters when he was a member of the Select Committee on the

118. (cont'd)

annuity tax was a serious handicap (letter (10th April 1852) from Gibson-Craig to Rutherfurd: NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.5). See also the correspondence of Russel in NLS, Ellice MS E 46.

119. Letter (9th April 1852): NLS, Rutherfurd MSS, Adv. MS 85.1.5. Sheriff Davidson agreed: "no committee, no organisation, and no reasonable chances of them. We shall be in the jaws of Duncan McLaren or someone equally abominable" (letter (12th April 1852) to Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/11).

120. Nicolson, Black, p. 162.

121. For details of Melgund's on-again, off-again candidacy, see NLS Minto MSS 135.2, 135.6 and 136.2.

122. For rather vague correspondence on this proposal, see NLS, Combe MS 7329, ff. 63-68 and Minto MS 136.2. Since 1845 as editorial assistant, and from 1849 as editor, Alexander Russel had made the Scotsman into a much more pliant as well as strident instrument of the Whig clique. The former editor, Charles Maclaren, had supported the Whigs with mild enthusiasm while occasionally chiding them for such things as hesitating to endorse immediate repeal of the corn laws during the 1840s and while maintaining links with such radicals as McLaren. But Russel reviled all opposition to the Whigs and reserved for McLaren such passionate invective that McLaren won a libel suit against the Scotsman in 1856. For

122. (cont'd)

details on Maclaren, see R. Cox and J. Nicol, "Memoir of Charles Maclaren" in Vol. I, Select Writings of Charles Maclaren, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1869); for Russel, see Cooper, Editor's Retrospect, p. 226 ff.

123. See report in Scotsman, 16th June 1852.

124. Letter (22nd May 1852): NLS, Ellice MS E 46, ff. 10-13.

125. Letter (2nd June 1852) from Gibson-Craig to Ellice: NLS, Ellice MS E 7, ff. 99-102.

126. Letter (19th June 1852) to Combe: NLS, Combe MS 7329, f. 65.

127. Scotsman, 16th June 1852.

128. Letter (11th August 1847) to ?: EPL (YJN 1351 .839).

129. Letter (16th June 1852): NLS, Burton MS 3931/52.

130. Quoted in Trevelyan, Macaulay, Vol. II, pp. 311-312.

131. Edinburgh Advertiser, 16th July 1852.

132. Letter (22nd June 1852) to Ellice: NLS, Ellice MS E 1A, f. 135.

133. Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 108. For an analysis of the election statistics, see Scotsman, 4th August 1852.

134. Edinburgh Advertiser, 16th July 1852; Scotsman, 14th July 1852.

135. Scottish Press, 5th June 1852.

136. Edinburgh Advertiser, 4th June 1852.

137. Reasons for Declining to Vote in Favour of Mr. Macaulay, (Edinburgh, 1852), p. 16.

138. Letter (13th July 1852) from Macaulay to Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/10, and letter (n.d.) from G. Dalziel to Gibson-Craig: SRO, Riccarton MS GD 145/12.

139. Caledonian Mercury, 17th May 1852.

140. Letter (2nd June 1852): NLS, Minto MS 135.2.

141. Caledonian Mercury, 13th May 1852.

142. Letter (12th June 1852) to Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 135.2.

143. Letter (12th June 1852) to Lord Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 135.2.

144. Edinburgh Courant, 15th July 1852.

145. Caledonian Mercury, 13th May 1852.

146. Scottish Press, 30th June 1852.

147. Edinburgh News, 26th June 1852. In the course of the election this personal enmity was publicly aired by Johnston. McLaren had accused the Free Churchmen of double-dealing in supporting the election of Moncreiff in the Leith election; Moncreiff approved of the Maynooth grant, but because he was a Free Churchman he was receiving Free Church support. This charge elicited

147. (cont'd)

an extremely bitter reply from Johnston in the form of a letter to the newspapers which attacked McLaren's radicalism and his role in the break-up of the alliance: "if you cannot present better claims to our suffrages than vulgar jokes and gross untruths, it were better far that you retired at once from the contest; and if you do not, I trust the citizens will prove by their votes that neither your Chartism nor your chicanery has any attractions for them. I have been frequently told that you are a dangerous person to have anything to do with; but I did not expect so soon to have practical experience of the fact. I hope my fellow-citizens may take care that they too do not take into their bosom the cold little snake that may turn round and bite them so soon as its gets warm enough" (Scotsman, 16th June 1852).

148. Letter (19th June 1852) to Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 135.2.

149. Edinburgh Advertiser, 14th May 1852.

150. Edinburgh News, 26th June 1852.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, the larger significance of the events described in the preceding chapters and the national context in which they were played out will be discussed. It is difficult to compare Edinburgh's political history with that of other Scottish cities because so little research has been done on Victorian political history in Scotland. The opportunity for meaningful comparison will come only when many more studies such as this one become available. However, certain aspects of Edinburgh politics were not uncommon features in other Scottish municipalities.

The triumph of Whiggery in 1832 was general to almost all Scottish urban constituencies, the seat for the Inverness burghs being the lone Conservative exception. The disappointment of radical townsmen with the moderation of the ensuing Whig governments was as universal a feature in Glasgow, Dunfermline, Aberdeen and Dundee as it was in Edinburgh. Likewise every Scottish city experienced the hostilities and conflicts of the different sectarian animosities, Churchmen with Dissenters, Evangelicals with Moderates. But there was great variation in the resolutions of these conflicts among the radicals and Whigs and among the sectarians, and this depended on the local conditions. The ratio between the different sects, the kind of radical, Whig and church leaders, the socio-economic circumstances, etc. of each city differed in interesting and important ways, many of which await the further research of

historians before they become clear enough for comparative analysis.

Edinburgh's relatively unchanged economic structure made her experience very different from other places. For instance, the lack of an important declining trade such as the handloom weaving industry meant that Chartist radicalism did not have such a sharp cutting edge as it did in Glasgow and Dundee. There was an important socio-economic contrast between the millocracy and shipbuilding interests of Glasgow and the Edinburgh shopocracy which gave Liberalism in both these places different characteristics. The higher proportion of professional people in Edinburgh and the larger concentration of poor Irish in Glasgow helped create different political climates too. The political importance of religious conflicts was more evident in Edinburgh, due to the large number of Dissenters and Free Churchmen, the peculiar existence of the annuity tax, and Edinburgh's significance as religious centre for the nation. Here again the absence of pressing economic changes may have had a crucial effect, allowing sectarian controversies to crowd out secular issues.

It would be interesting to determine how frequently other Scottish cities experienced the kind of socio-economic rivalry that took political shape in Edinburgh between the lawyers and the shopkeepers. It was a conflict which certainly figured in English towns and one can plausibly expect similar developments with local variations in Scotland too. The sectarian aspects of politics in the early Victorian period were common throughout Scotland; many elections,

particularly in the years just before and after the disruption, turned on religious issues and parties. The complications caused among secular parties by the rise of political non-intrusionism can be studied, for instance, in terms of Greenock, a very different constituency from Edinburgh which nevertheless was subject to the same sectarian pressures.[1] One can be sure that Sir James Forrest and Sir William Johnston had their obscure counterparts in many other parts of Scotland. Duncan McLaren, however, like the annuity tax, appears to have been virtually unique. His ability to rally Dissenter opposition to the Whigs and his attempts to weld a Liberal party out of the liberal Free Churchmen and Dissenters were unparalleled by any other Scottish Dissenter and it is clear that he was regarded as the lay leader of Dissent in Scotland. This may well have led to Edinburgh political developments being more advanced with differences more sharply defined between different groups and leaders than was the case in other places. The shock which was the almost universal reaction to Macaulay's defeat in 1847 anywhere outside Edinburgh indicates perhaps the precocity of McLaren's leadership and the resultant uniqueness of Edinburgh's political developments.

Beyond these general remarks it does not seem justifiable to venture. At the present time when so much remains to be learned of the nature of local politics throughout Victorian Scotland it would be premature to try and set Edinburgh in a context whose features remain so indistinct and uncertain. It is more useful now

to determine how Edinburgh's political history compares with better known developments. The case of Edinburgh offers an interesting local reflection of the course of general British politics during the same period. This involves not only the same issues but also similar characteristics in the parties and personalities.

The widespread popularity of the English Whigs in the wake of the Reform Bill was paralleled by the even more spectacular popularity of the Edinburgh Whigs, chief advocates of reform before 1832 and chief architects of reform of the Scottish constituencies, suffrage and burgh government in 1832-1833. Radicalism in Edinburgh, as personified in the disappointing career of James Aytoun, found itself isolated and disunited as did English radicalism in the Parliaments of Lords Grey and Melbourne. To a degree, the inability of these Whig governments to retain the broad support of 1830-1832 was not unlike the failure of the Edinburgh Whigs to maintain the one-sided popularity described in Chapter Three above. Both Whig groups began to appear less responsive to interests who felt they had a claim to Whig sympathy and support. The two most important groups here were the urban shopkeepers and merchants and the Dissenters. With free trade and voluntaryism as their mottoes, these self-conscious minorities became less and less convinced of the sincerity of the Whigs who in Parliament and Edinburgh were very wary of becoming mere tools of the urban middle class.

In both cases the distinction between Whig and what would

become Liberal was based partially on socio-economic differences. If the noble cousinhood of English Whig grandees was held in some suspicion by radicals by dint of their feudal wealth and aristocratic pretensions, so too was the Whig clique of Edinburgh lawyers subject to a similar social critique. As Duncan McLaren once said, the Edinburgh lawyers were the city's aristocrats. The Liberal shopkeepers and tradesmen almost automatically reacted against the high social status of Edinburgh's wealthy professional elite by suspecting in any Whig policy which did not follow Liberal principles the grasping selfishness of hypocritical enemies of the people. Both the Edinburgh and the English Whigs were, on the whole, rather more conservative than their roles in 1830-1832 would suggest and although their public utterances and activities before 1830 indicated this, it was still a shock to many to discover after 1832 how prepared the Whigs were to bow to the will of the House of Lords and to defer further reforms to the indefinite future. As the Whigs disappointed the Aytouns and McLarens, it became clearer and clearer to the discontented that the Whigs were after 1832 a self-seeking cabal of schemers, a close company, related by blood and social ties, promoting their own interests over the needs of the nation and the standards of statesmanship.

All over Britain in the 1830s the Dissenters were leading the rising chorus of discontent. As church rates goaded English Dissenters, the annuity tax spurred the Edinburgh Dissenters; in both cases, the Whigs did not achieve the Dissenter goal of

abolition. Whatever the complex reasons responsible for this failure, the Dissenters everywhere attributed to the Whigs a craven lack of commitment to Dissenter interests plus a crafty strategy of promising Dissenters relief which kept the latter obediently voting Whig. The considerable achievements of Whig governments in removing some Dissenter disabilities only seemed to whet Dissenter appetites for more while throwing remaining burdens and injustices into sharper and more intolerable relief. The Dissenter rebellion peaked temporarily in England at the election of 1837 when the results were rather disappointing. In Edinburgh the Dissenter movement took somewhat longer to emerge into political independence; the election of 1841 was the occasion of the first concerted Dissenter political initiative.

The disruption of the Church of Scotland profoundly altered the course of Dissenter political development. The discontent of the Free Church could be used against the Established Church and the chance of a powerful political combination which had no counterpart south of the border kept Dissenters' hopes for success stronger than they were in England. The old hostility between Evangelicals and Dissenters, the insistence of most Free Churchmen upon the establishment principle, and the extremely sensitive pride and ambition of the Free Church party were formidable obstacles to the projected alliance; the unfortunate municipal election of 1840 was evidence of how easy it was for Dissenters and Non-Intrusionists to engage in the fiercest rivalry. But with the

Established Church as a common enemy after 1843 and with both groups feeling little loyalty towards the Whigs, there was now an opportunity for cooperation which Duncan McLaren set himself to realize.

Meanwhile, free trade became the crucial issue defining the hostility between Edinburgh's merchants and professional political establishment. Duncan McLaren used the issue to expose the Edinburgh Whigs' purported reluctance to serve the needs of the urban middle class, an instance therefore of how Whiggery had to be superceded by a more responsive Liberalism in order for the middle class to gain their deferred political inheritance. The terms of McLaren's argument were not therefore unlike those of the English Anti-Corn Law Leaguers, and, as developed above in Chapter Five, McLaren's attack on Macaulay was carefully coordinated with Bright and Cobden. Macaulay ably played the role assigned to him by the Leaguers -- the unrepentant, apparently unprincipled seeker after party emolument -- while somehow personifying many of the characteristics, such as aloof unresponsiveness and pompous snobbery, which Edinburgh's middle class radicals asserted were common features of the Whig clique. Hence in Edinburgh, the national rift between the Whigs and the urban middle class was taking a very local form which was also symbolic of the larger context.

Simultaneously, Macaulay was flagrantly antagonizing many of his constituents on an even more crucial issue. His uncompromising

support for the Maynooth grant was for many Dissenters and Free Churchmen (and some Established Churchmen too) an intolerable proof of how iniquitous the logical extension of Whig toleration could become. Practically every sect had old grudges against the Whigs, and the Maynooth grant, almost universally despised, provided the ideal issue on which to unify the previously antagonistic sects. All the frustration of the Dissenters with the Whig failure to remove the annuity tax and the state church relationship and the discontent of the Free Church with the guarded response of the Whigs to the Non-Intrusionists could now be vented by a coalition designed to remove the most outstanding personification of Whig vices.

It was McLaren's consummate leadership which brought together the Free Churchmen and Dissenters with the middle class radicals in a grand coalition to unseat Macaulay. And when he had been swept from Edinburgh by the triumph of the political unknown, Charles Cowan, it was really McLaren's victory and it signalled the arrival of a new middle class party in Edinburgh, a party broad in membership but with a narrow range of agreed objects. McLaren's success was perhaps the most auspicious example of Dissenter middle class rebellion against the Whigs in the general election of 1847. English Dissenters had scored an encouraging number of successes, although they still were far too few in Parliament to achieve the major goals for which Lord John Russell's government was not prepared to work. Although it is

correct to emphasize the limited nature of these victories in the national context,[2] it should not be forgotten what an electrical effect they had in the constituencies concerned. In Edinburgh the victory of Cowan represented the temporary ascendancy of the middle class Leaguers over the Whig lawyers, of the sectarians over the erastian Whigs, and if McLaren could maintain the coalition, the chances of permanently overturning the social and political establishment of the professional class were very good.

The weakness of the Whig government which was in power after the election of 1847 has been frequently described.[3] The Whigs did little on the national level to restore confidence in their ability to lead, while continuing to disappoint the urban middle class radicals and doing little to mollify the Dissenters. It became clearer than ever how insular the outlook of the Whig grandees remained, retreating from the threshold of statesmanship reached in 1846 with Russell's Edinburgh letter, and failing to recruit Cobden into a truly new Liberal government which might have attracted new middle class enthusiasm without necessarily antagonizing traditional Whig support. There is a close parallel here with the Edinburgh Whigs who reacted to their defeat with no concessions to the desires of their enemies and no overt attempt to assuage hostility with conciliatory gestures. The most obvious such gesture would have been some attempt to dispel the image of a clique and the recruitment of McLaren would have been the most dramatic and possibly the most efficacious tactic open to the Whigs. But McLaren, like

Cobden, was too problematical a figure to be accepted by the Whig coterie and the chance for a Liberal reconciliation was apparently never seriously considered by the Edinburgh or national Whigs. The Edinburgh Whigs, like the Whig government, failed both to develop any coherent programme to disarm the left or to provide the firm leadership which might have appealed to moderate elements alienated by the wavering, stop-gap measures and positions so frequently taken up by the Whigs in response to particular crises or interests.

But in Edinburgh as in Britain, the Whigs muddled through the mid-Victorian era, largely due to the inability of the opposition to capitalize on the Whigs' manifest weakness. If conservatism on the national level was temporarily disqualified by protectionism, the Edinburgh variety, due to lingering memories of the pre-1832 'Tory tyranny' and the party's usual support of the Established Church, was equally unlikely to attract massive support in the 1840s and 1850s. This left a large bloc of moderate or conservative Edinburgh electors with little choice but to support the Whigs who alone could pose a viable alternative to the various sects and radicals. The absolutely crucial factor, however, in the maintenance of Whig power after 1847 was the crippling inability of the Liberal alliance of 1847 to maintain itself. United as in 1847, the strength of the Free Church-Dissenter radical coalition, or Edinburgh Liberal party, was sufficient to topple Macaulay or probably any other Whig candidate. But as explained in Chapter

Six above, there were just too many divisive and exacerbating pressures working to split the Liberal party into its many components. The leadership rivalry revolving around McLaren, the basic disagreements over establishment and secular political principles plus the insidious group jealousies between the Free Churchmen and Dissenters destroyed the Liberal unity from within and the Whigs hardly had to raise a finger to hasten the eventual collapse.

The collapse came with the election of 1852 with Free Church and Dissenter candidates splitting the Liberal vote. As independent denominational units, the Free Church and Dissenter parties were unable to prevent the return of Macaulay in Edinburgh. Thus was shown in Edinburgh what had become increasingly clear in the English constituencies in the 1840s. This was the ineffectiveness of denominational groups in politics which did not ally themselves with a more broadly based political party with strong secular interests.[4] Especially in Edinburgh with its fractured sectarian composition, the denominational parties were far too narrow in outlook and aim to attain a wide enough popularity to challenge the Whigs successfully. And when coalition brought temporary success the victory did not consolidate union but rather exposed differences. When jealousy and old hostilities, stimulated by ideological conflicts, were allowed to blaze up into outright political rivalry in 1852, the Free Church and Dissenter parties could only cancel each other out in mutual opposition while Macaulay capitalized

upon many moderate voters' dislike of sectarian politics and posed as a statesman with an exalted outlook upon all the problems of state, above interests and pettiness. This quintessentially Whig image still held appeal and the more so in contrast to narrow ecclesiastical factions.

McLaren was always aware of the weakness of sectarian parties and at key points such as in 1841, 1847 and 1852 tried to make the Dissenter party as concerned with secular reforms as with its ecclesiastical grievances. The free trade issue served this broadening purpose and the success of McLaren's Liberal party in 1847 was no doubt partly due to the potent blending of secular and sectarian criticism of Macaulay's conduct. But McLaren found that nothing replaced free trade as a secular issue which could augment religious discontent as the double foundation for a popular political party. Free Churchmen were generally too conservative to rally round further Parliamentary reform as the Dissenters did. McLaren and the Dissenters remained more or less in the political wilderness until the mid-1860s when once again McLaren was able to construct a successful political coalition, this time between the newly enfranchised and politically awakened working class voters of Edinburgh and the middle class Dissenters.[5] It is interesting to note that even in 1865 McLaren's Parliamentary candidacy was threatened for a/while by a too exclusive concentration by McLaren and his colleagues upon the still-festering anti-annuity tax agitation. Only by appealing to both the Dissenters and the

ardently pro-electoral reform working class voters was McLaren able to defeat the octogenarian Adam Black whose crusty repudiation of Parliamentary reform was undoubtedly the chief cause of his defeat.[6]

The coalition of working class and Dissenter votes that swept McLaren and a fellow Liberal to victory in 1868 without opposition from Conservatives or Whigs, was like successful Liberal voting blocs in many other Victorian cities. Dissenters had finally found their political Messiah in Gladstone and apparently comprehended the futility of purely sectarian politics. It was, however, a lesson which had to be learnt again by the Dissenters in the 1870s when disappointment with Gladstone's policies led to important defections in 1874. By 1880 the Dissenters had once again faced reality and accepted the necessity for compromise within the Liberal party. Thus, McLaren's failure to create a successful Dissenter party in the 1840s, viewed in the full perspective of the Victorian era, can be seen as a rather inevitable one given the nature of the electorate. Macaulay's defeat in 1847 was the false dawn, and by the time Parliamentary reform rescued him from the doldrums of the 'age of equipoise', McLaren was an old man of 65. He had grown old contributing to the essential process which eventually produced late Victorian liberalism. McLaren's place in history is rightfully alongside that of Cobden and Bright as the frequently unsuccessful groundbreakers for the foundations of the Liberal party which Gladstone completed.

It is easy to see, then, in many aspects of Edinburgh's political developments between 1832 and 1852 the local working out of conflicts and characteristics which are well known on the national level. To emphasize these aspects one does, however, risk distorting Edinburgh's experience. For instance it is well to keep in mind, John Vincent's reminder that

> for most people politics was the politics of the town in which they lived their lives, and for them, and in their own terms, elections were a rational business, in which the real issue was not the Parliamentary representation of the borough, but the relative positions of the electors within the town. [7]

Clearly in Edinburgh, the relative positions of the electors was in many ways uniquely formed by the particular congeries of social, economic, sectarian and personal influences which have been described at length in this thesis. Responding to national events, keeping in close touch through the expanding local press with developments in other cities, the Edinburgh electorate still, however, was moved by very local circumstances which cannot be explained with reference only to the generalizations which make sense in the national context.[8]

It would be wrong, therefore, to look only for the shadows of the national silhouette in every constituency. Due to the infinitely varied local backgrounds, it is often impossible to understand why the shadows fell the way they did. The investigation of t he local backgrounds all over Britain is needed before we can be happy with

the broad generalizations with which historians are living now. This is particularly critical for Scotland, since probably no century in modern Scottish political history has been subjected to so little close scrutiny as the nineteenth. To help to lift the veil of ignorance which obscures so much of Victorian Scottish political history and to contribute to a growing mass of information out of which new generalizations and understanding can be gained is the goal of this study.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN

1. See Minto MSS in the NLS, especially 128.2-4.

2. See Gash, Reaction and Reconstruction, pp. 103-105.

3. See ibid., pp. 191-200, and Southgate, Passing of the Whigs, Chapters VI and IX.

4. See Kitson Clark, Making of Victorian England, p. 203.

5. In 1856 a most important act had been passed which provided for the automatic electoral registration of all qualified citizens, replacing the old system of applications and fees and temporary disenfranchisement when moving house. At one stroke the electorate was expanded from 5,000 to 8,000 by the inclusion of thousands of voters who had never troubled themselves with the bother or the expense of registering. This new electoral power, observed most newspapers, consisted chiefly of the poorer members of the electorate (see Edinburgh News, 30th April 1859, and North Briton, 14th June 1865). A new newspaper, speaking in the interest of these new voters, the North Briton, urged a further extension of the franchise and picked McLaren as the middle class leader whom the working class should support (see North Briton, 21st May 1859, for instance).

6. In 1865, the North Briton was highly critical of McLaren's Liberals for concentrating too exclusively upon "the Annuity-tax question, and other paltry trifles . . . the choice lies between

6. (cont'd)

progression and retrogression, and the duty of the working man is plain" (14th June 1865). Pro-McLaren newspapers and speakers took the hint and began to emphasize Parliamentary reform at least as much as voluntaryism (see, for instance, Caledonian Mercury, 13th July 1865). Black was heavily defeated while McLaren just exceeded Lord Advocate Moncreiff's total. Since Moncreiff was hated by Dissenters for his annuity tax bill of 1860 (which only adjusted the administrative details of the tax), his victory appears to have been due to working class voters' preference for his pro-reform stand over Black's conservatism. McLaren's running mate, John Miller, an unattractive stranger to the constituency, was fourth in the poll behind Black. The results were: McLaren -- 4,354; Moncreiff -- 4,148; Black -- 3,797 and Miller -- 3,723 (Wilkie, Representation of Scotland, p. 109).

7. J.R. Vincent, The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857-1868 (London, 1966), p. xv.

8. Macaulay's defeat in 1847 is perhaps the best example of an event which could not be understood properly without reference to the particular tension between the professional elite and the shopocracy, the crucial role of McLaren, etc.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A Statistical Comparison of the Edinburgh Electorates of 1835 and 1866

This is an occupational analysis of the Edinburgh electoral registers of 1835 and 1866, comparing the numbers of voters in each occupation which is listed in these registers. In the absence of pollbooks, these registers serve as the most promising sources of information regarding the changing social character of the electorate. They can, however, be used only with great caution to generalize about the character of the city.

My sources for this survey are the electoral registers for 1835 and 1866, published by the Edinburgh University Press, and now located in the Edinburgh Room of the Edinburgh Public Library. The 1835 electoral register contains a good deal of duplications due to double entries when a voter had moved from one house to another within that year. This results in an imbalance in favour of the poorer voters as the lower classes were always much more migratory than the upper class. The Registration Act of 1856 eliminated the necessity for re-registering immediately upon removal as the qualification was considered to last the entire year; therefore the 1866 register gives a truer picture of the electorate.

I have attempted to give a general description by means of this analysis and I should not like to make a claim for mathematical

perfection. I have in many cases grouped associated trades or artisans together. For instance, I have included coachpainters with coachmakers; and since very often a coachmaker was a coach-hirer as well, I have grouped these occupations together. It was very common in nineteenth century Edinburgh for a craftsman to be his own retailer; for instance, a furniture maker often listed himself as a furniture maker and seller. Only those voters who listed themselves strictly as retailers are included in that section. It must be borne in mind that each voter presumably described himself for the registrar of voters and personal vanity may therefore colour the registers. Also, it is wise to keep in mind that such omnibus terms as 'clerk' included a bewildering variety of occupations, from a position in the Anglican church to a scrivener. I have had to lump craftsmen and manufacturers together chiefly because of my ignorance of the technological processes involved in many of the occupations given below. Some of the marked rises and declines in certain occupations may be due to terminological rather than economic changes. For instance, the disappearance of haberdashers by 1866 means probably that no one chose to describe himself as a haberdasher by 1866, not that the trade disappeared. Such changes as well as the vagueness of many of the terms used to describe occupations obviously tend to reduce the accuracy of this analysis. I should like to stress that this comparison is only a crude breakdown of the electorate without any pretensions to proper sociological analysis. It

must also be emphasized that the groups into which I have chosen to separate the occupations cohere only in the most general aspect, i.e. the basic form of occupation -- that is skilled labour, unskilled labour, work requiring professional training, and retailing. It is almost impossible to assume degrees of affluence from forms of occupation. All that can be said is that every voter had a certain minimum affluence in order to qualify to vote. Comparisons of relative affluence could only be made on the basis of an elaborate cross-reference from rate-books.

In the following tables, the total number of electors in each occupation is given, together with the percentage of the total electorate this number represents (this percentage is given in parentheses). There are thus two columns of figures, one for 1835 and one for 1866, followed by the difference between the two percentages.

Summary

Economic Group	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage
Professions	2036	(26.4)	1603	(16.2)
Retailers	2158	(28.0)	2391	(24.2)
Whitecollar	414	(5.4)	1160	(11.7)
Labourers	132	(1.7)	712	(7.2)
Craftsmen/ Manufacturers	2199	(28.6)	3345	(33.8)
Miscellaneous	809	(10.5)	706	(7.1)
	7748		9917	

Part I: The Professions

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Teachers	135	(1.7)	200	(2.0)	+ .3%
Services	172	(2.2)	97	(1.0)	-1.2%
Banking	66	(.8)	34	(.3)	-0.5%
Architect	21	(.3)	50	(.5)	+0.2%
Clergymen	65	(.8)	204	(2.0)	+1.2%
Students	8	(.1)	8	-	-0.1%
Medicine (including surgeon, veterinary surgeon, optician, dentist, M.D., apothecary, physician)	327	(4.1)	303	(3.0)	-1.1%
Professors/ lecturers	19	(.2)	39	(.4)	+0.2%
Arts (including portrait painters, sculptors, musicians, artists, comedians)	51	(.6)	98	(1.0)	+0.4%
Solicitors and S.S.C.	178	(2.3)	195	(1.9)	-0.4%
Writers	286	(3.6)	167	(1.6)	-2.0%
Writers to the Signet	512	(6.5)	234	(2.3)	-4.2%
Advocates	210	(2.9)	132	(1.3)	-1.6%
Law Court officials	42	(.5)	42	(.4)	-0.1%
Librarians	-	-	10	(.1)	+0.1%

Part II: Retailers

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Grocers	314	(4.0)	447	(4.4)	+ .4%
Flesher/ butchers	136	(1.7)	136	(1.3)	- .4%
Bakers	207	(2.6)	188	(1.9)	- .7%
Victual dealers	76	(1.0)	38	(.4)	- .6%
Confectioners	35	(.4)	48	(.5)	+ .1%
Fruiterers	11	(.1)	25	(.2)	+ .1%
Fishmongers	8	(.1)	13	(.1)	nc*
Wine/spirit merchants	352	(4.5)	300	(2.9)	-1.6%
Publicans	60	(.8)	20	(.2)	- .6%
Stationers	52	(.7)	29	(.3)	- .4%
Music-sellers	8	(.1)	12	(.1)	nc
General Merchants	393	(5.0)	268	(2.6)	-2.4%
China Merchants	15	(.2)	36	(.4)	+ .2%
Meal Dealers	14	(.2)	-	-	- .2%
Seedsmen	12	(.2)	36	(.4)	+ .2%
Haberdashers	27	(.3)	-	-	- .3%
Metal Merchants	-	-	10	(.1)	+ .1%
Ironmongers	44	(.6)	70	(.7)	+ .1%
Coal Merchants	29	(.4)	80	(.8)	+ .4%
Wood Merchants	13	(.2)	13	(.1)	- .1%
Stoneware Dealers	8	(.1)	7	-	- .1%
Horsehirers	11	(.1)	8	-	- .1%
Hairdressers	31	(.4)	32	(.3)	- .1%
Booksellers	117	(1.5)	82	(.8)	- .7%
Tobacconists	51	(.6)	47	(.5)	- .1%
Hotel/Inn Keepers	40	(.5)	86	(.8)	+ .3%
Shopkeepers	4	-	52	(.5)	+ .5%
Pawnbrokers	12	(.2)	27	(.3)	+ .1%
Dairymen	5	-	82	(.8)	+ .8%
Cattledealers	2	-	30	(.3)	+ .3%
Salesmen	4	-	28	(.3)	+ .3%
Brokers	46	(.6)	58	(.6)	nc
Photographers	-	-	45	(.4)	+ .4%

NOTE: Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in both 1835 and 1866 include oil merchants (3 in 1835, 4 in 1866) undertakers (1-5), billiard room keepers (3-4), and poulterers (4-2). Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1835 and non-existent in 1866 include picture dealers (4 in 1835), cheesemongers (3), and mineral dealers (1). Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1866 and non-existent in 1835 include newsagents (5 in 1866), bird dealers (4), drysalters (7), and rag dealers (7).

* no change

Part III: White Collar

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Accountants	128	(1.6)	123	(1.2)	- .4%
Cashiers	-	-	16	(.2)	+ .2%
In spectors	-	-	30	(.3)	+ .3%
Commercial Travellers	1	-	147	(1.4)	+1.4%
Auctioneers	13	(.2)	23	(.2)	nc
Agents	72	(.9)	134	(1.3)	+ .4%
Insurance	6	-	23	(.2)	+ .2%
Surveyors	22	(.3)	23	(.2)	- .1%
Newspapers	5	-	15	(.2)	+ .2%
House Agents	6	-	18	(.2)	+ .2%
Clerks	102	(1.3)	606	(5.9)	+4.6%
Stockbrokers	-	-	20	(.2)	+ .2%
House governors	-	-	9	(.1)	+ .1%
Civil servants includes:	59	(.7)	62	(.6)	- .1%
Police	10	(.1)	34	(.3)	+ .2%
Municipal govt. and postmen	32	(.4)	27	(.3)	- .1%
Register House	8	(.1)	-	-	- .1%
Postmasters	10	(.1)	-	-	- .1%

NOTE: Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in both 1835 and 1866 include Customs men (civil servants) (6-1).

Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1835 and non-existent in 1866 include Exchequermen (civil servants) (3).

Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1866 and non-existent in 1835 include recorder (2), curator (6), and advertising (3).

Part IV: Labourers

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Servants	25	(.3)	134	(1.3)	+1.0%
Gardeners	53	(.7)	69	(.7)	nc
Warehousemen	8	(.1)	66	(.6)	+ .5%
Messengers	14	(.2)	45	(.4)	+ .2%
Carters/ Waggoners	7	-	59	(.6)	+ .6%
Carrier/porters	6	-	54	(.5)	+ .5%
Hackney coachmen	3	-	57	(.6)	+ .6%
Cellarmen	-	-	8	(.1)	+ .1%
Labourers	-	-	89	(.9)	+ .9%
Cowfeeders	56	(.7)	31	(.3)	- .4%
Railroad workers	-	-	73	(.7)	+ .7%

NOTE: Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in both 1835 and 1866 include chimney sweeps (3-5), janitors (1-4), and chairmen (3-1).

Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1835 and non-existent in 1866 include mailguards (5), quarrymen (2), and canalmen (2).

Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1866 and non-existent in 1835 include hostlers (6), hawkers (6), miners (1), and gasfitters (4).

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Plasterers	14	(.2)	32	(.3)	+ .1%
Plumbers	25	(.3)	60	(.6)	+ .3%
Painters	87	(1.1)	114	(1.1)	nc
Builder/joiners	155	(2.0)	327	(3.2)	+1.2%
Masons	28	(.4)	128	(1.3)	+ .9%
Slater/glaziers	21	(.3)	47	(.5)	+ .2%
Saddlers	31	(.4)	28	(.3)	- .1%
Engravers	44	(.6)	67	(.7)	+ .1%
Jewellers	85	(1.1)	99	(1.0)	- .1%
Boot/shoemakers	205	(2.6)	289	(2.8)	+ .2%
Watch/clock-makers	33	(.4)	41	(.4)	nc
Engineers	30	(.4)	103	(1.0)	+ .6%
Hosier/glovers	38	(.5)	27	(.3)	- .2%
Brewer/distillers	67	(.8)	64	(.6)	- .2%
Tanner/curriers	45	(.6)	50	(.5)	- .1%
Skinner/furriers	10	(.1)	5	-	- .1%
Stable maker	19	(.2)	8	-	- .2%
Drapers	67	(.8)	145	(1.4)	+ .6%
Tailor/clothiers	243	(3.1)	346	(3.4)	+ .3%
Upholsterers	42	(.5)	70	(.7)	+ .2%
Carver/gilders	22	(.3)	31	(.3)	nc
Silk mercers	40	(.5)	23	(.2)	- .3%
Coachmakers, etc	57	(.7)	109	(1.1)	+ .4%
Printer/publishers	105	(1.3)	199	(2.0)	+ .7%
Bookbinders	20	(.3)	21	(.3)	nc
Cabinet makers	110	(1.6)	216	(2.1)	+ .5%
Gunmakers	9	(.1)	21	(.2)	+ .1%
Perfumers	15	(.2)	3	-	- .2%
Millers	3	-	18	(.2)	+ .2%
Furnituremakers	9	(.1)	28	(.3)	+ .2%
Candlemakers	14	(.2)	5	-	- .2%
Manufacturers	27	(.3)	16	(.2)	- .1%
Corkcutters	8	(.1)	15	(.2)	+ .1%
Wrights	78	(1.0)	37	(.4)	- .6%
Marblecutters	7	-	8	(.1)	+ .1%
Musical instru-ment makers	14	(.2)	25	(.3)	+ .1%
Shawl manu.	14	(.2)	6	-	- .2%
Hatters	40	(.5)	52	(.5)	nc
Lithographers	7	-	23	(.2)	+ .2%

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Lacemakers	8	(.1)	7	-	- .1%
Glassmakers	12	(.2)	25	(.3)	+ .1%
Bell hangers	6	-	12	(.1)	+ .1%
Die/stampcutters	5	-	11	(.1)	+ .1%
Brushmakers	14	(.2)	16	(.2)	nc
Basketmakers	4	-	11	(.1)	+ .1%
Umbrellamakers	6	-	10	(.1)	+ .1%
Coopers	6	-	18	(.2)	+ .2%
Pocketbook makers	2	-	9	(.1)	+ .1%
Toymakers	6	-	9	(.1)	+ .1%
Dyers	13	(.2)	14	(.1)	- .1%
French polishers	1	-	8	(.1)	+ .1%
Compositors	-	-	36	(.4)	+ .4%
Trimming manu.	-	-	11	(.1)	+ .1%
Paper stainers	-	-	10	(.1)	+ .1%
Metermakers	-	-	10	(.1)	+ .1%
Metal workers (including ironfounders, tinplate workers, brassfounders, wireworkers, pewterers, coppersmiths, tinsmiths, blacksmiths)	107	(1.4)	210	(2.1)	+ .7%
Implement/tool makers (including axlemakers, last makers, surgical instrument makers, cutlers, tacksmen, letterfounders, spring makers, type founders, punch cutters, nail makers, planemakers, and filecutters)	28	(.4)	57	(.6)	+ .2%

NOTE: Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in both 1835 and 1866 include papermakers (3-5), Venetian blind makers (5-6), comb makers (7-3), macers (3-5) carpet manufacturers (3-5), trunkmakers (1-7), composition ornament makers (1-3), ropemakers (6-7), soap makers (2-3), machinists (3-5), cotton manufacturers (2-1), pipe manufacturers (1-4), and paviours (1-3).

Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1835 and non-existent in 1866 include wigmakers (2), linen manufacturers (1), taxidermists (3), corsetmakers (1), boat builders (2), jewel/snuffbox makers (3), flax dressers (2), sealing wax manufacturers (1), lint makers (4), locksmiths (1), stocking framework knitters (1), pencil/quill makers (2), buttonmakers (1), bleachers (2), and sugar refiners (1).

NOTE: Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate (cont'd) in 1866 and non-existent in 1835 include bedding manufacturers (1), chemical manufacturers (4), whip gut manufacturers (4), picture-frame makers (4), soda water makers (6), sports equipment manufacturers (4), telegraph machinists (5), sawyers (7), muslin printers (1), stirrupmakers (1), curled hair manufacturers (4), asphalters (1), ink manufacturers (1), envelope makers (1), floor cloth makers (2), paper hanging maker (2), bottlers (5), and lampmakers (4).

Part VI: Miscellaneous

Occupation	1835 number	1835 percentage	1866 number	1866 percentage	difference
Gentlemen	207	(2.6)	262	(2.6)	nc
Residenters	562	(7.1)	389	(3.8)	-3.3%
Farmer/ foresters	23	(.3)	21	(.2)	- .1%
Contractors	2	-	18	(.2)	+ .2%
Captains	-	-	10	(.1)	+ .1%

NOTE: Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in both 1835 and 1866 include shipowners (3-4), and employees of the Gas Company (5-2).

Occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1835 and non-existent in 1866 include mariners (5), dogbreakers (1), and employees of the East India Company (1).

There were no occupations with less than .1% of the total electorate in 1866 and non-existent in 1835.

This comparative survey proves the wide diversity of occupations represented in the Edinburgh electorate. Every general classification was broken into a multiplicity of related but disparate occupations. The legal occupation came as close as any occupation to dominating a general group, but the legal profession itself could be broken down into five separate occupations -- advocates, writers to the signet, solicitors, writers and officials of the law courts. There was an extraordinary variety of occupations, particularly among retailers and craftsmen and manufacturers. Degrees of affluence within each occupation must have ranged widely and this would have contributed further to the diversity of the electorate. There was no one occupation which dominated the others and the three largest classifications -- the professions, retailers, and craftsmen/manufacturers -- were roughly equal in 1835. The proportion was somewhat different in 1866, the professions having shrunk considerably, the retailers slightly. The craftsmen/manufacturers group was in a dominating position because of this, although it still comprised only a third of the electorate. The electorate does not therefore appear to have changed radically in occupational character, nor did it increase dramatically in size over the entire period between the reform acts.

It is not very easy to relate this occupational profile of the electorate to the entire city, since the electorates of approximately

8,000 in 1835 and 10,000 in 1866 represented only about 5% of the total population at these times. Only a detailed analysis of the census returns can indicate the actual socio-economic divisions in the city, but this analysis of the electorate does at least begin to reflect, however distortedly, the city's general diversity of economic and social functions as well as its slow rate of growth and change.

APPENDIX II

Electioneering in Edinburgh, 1832-1852

The following information is as much as I could gather from the available sources on the corruption, expenses and techniques of elections in Edinburgh. Writing in 1852 a Whig, James Simpson, observed that "there is no election in the Kingdom less costly and more gentlemanlike than Edinburgh".[1] Corruption was practically non-existent according to all sources. In 1856 the Edinburgh News, in reporting the dispensation of sweets to children in Causewayside by a candidate for the Town Council declared that "so far as we know, this is the first time in Edinburgh contests, civic or Parliamentary, in which the thin edge of corruption has ever been attempted to be introduced".[2] Bribery was similarly unknown throughout the period.[3] The Tory candidate in 1835, Lord Ramsay, recorded in his Journal:

> one man and one only shewed an inclination to take a bribe. It was a shoemaker near the Lothian road. He took me mysteriously into his back shop and there told me he was ready to vote for me, but his taxes were not paid and he should have no objection to see them first discharged. I made him a low bow and walked out. [4]

But in this same election there was a great deal of intimidation and coercion practised against shopkeepers and tradesmen. Party newspapers constantly criticized the other party for practising such tactics.[5] In Edinburgh libraries there survive some examples

of notes to tradesmen from women whose husbands directed them to cease their patronage if the recipient of the threats did not vote for Tory candidates.[6] In the 1834 municipal election the Tories went so far as to publish a leaflet requesting electors of the conservative 5th district that "should you have influence with any of the following electors, you are requested to exercise it in favour of the Church candidates".[7] There followed a list of about fifty tradesmen, mostly grocers, bakers, shoemakers and tailors. This is the most blatant piece of evidence for such tactics. No doubt intimidation still existed throughout the rest of the period, but the decline in newspaper comment suggests that it had by the 1840s ceased to be so common as in the 1830s. But even in the 1830s Edinburgh was comparatively free of the kind of outright corruption and treating which went on in so many other constituencies. Sir John Campbell, fresh from his defeat in corrupt Dudley, was impressed with the purity of the Edinburgh election of 1834:

> though the contest was a severe one, there not only was not a shilling spent in bribery, but there was not distributed a pint of ale or a gill of whisky at my expense. Indeed there was no drinking by reason of the election. . . . . The cost of the election was considerable but it arose chiefly from agency. Thereafter the agents acted gratuitously, and the disbursements of the members were confined to the hustings and other strictly legal expenses of the election, a yearly contribution in aid of registration, a subscription to charities and public undertakings, and private benevolence expected in London by all Edinburgh people in distress. [8]

Election expenses varied considerably throughout the period.

In 1832, according to Nicolson, "the total expenses were ludicrously small, in comparison with those of later times, even in uncontested elections. They did not exceed £200, and even of that modest outlay the members were relieved by the constituency".[9] The Conservatives were apparently less generous with their candidates and in the election of 1835 Learmonth and Ramsay together paid £1,500 towards the expenses which were much higher than those of 1832.[10] The Liberal candidate in 1856, F. Brown Douglas, contributed about £750 to his own election costs,[11] and Macaulay paid £500 in 1839 but was returned by the Whigs in 1852 free of charge.[12] Official expenses (the cost of erecting polling places and hustings and for polling clerks, etc.) remained constant throughout the period at about £300 per candidate.[13] Nothing is known, however, of the money spent on unofficial matters until the election of 1865. The two Whigs, Black and Moncreiff, spent a total of more than £1,633, of which £525 was spent on agents and clerks, £186 on stationery and printing, £56 on advertising, £49 on canvassing, £164 on cabs, and £190 on miscellaneous items such as hall rentals and postage. The Liberals, McLaren and Miller, spent almost exactly the same amount, in much the same way: £656 on agents and clerks, £473 on printing, advertising and postage, £165 for cabs and railway fares, and £124 on hall rentals.[14] This was the first severely contested election since 1852, and with an increased electorate, there is reason to suppose that the expenses were higher than for most other Edinburgh elections.

The form which Parliamentary elections took did not change between 1832 and 1868. Once the party had chosen its candidate, he was presented at a large meeting open to the public. District meetings followed in the next days at which candidates repeated the generalities first aired in the initial meeting and were questioned on specific issues by electors and sometimes non-electors in the audience. The candidates were nominated at the hustings and and returned after the election to hear the poll declared and the victor proclaimed; both these hustings appearances were the opportunity for the parties to show their strength by walking to the ceremony in procession, and for the non-electors to give vent to their feelings.[15] The candidates found it all exhausting and somewhat degrading. Jeffrey in 1832 complained to Lord Brougham that the gruelling round of speeches "is very tiresome and leads to damnable iteration. But my committee say it is indispensable."[16] Canvassing was sometimes done by the candidates, but it was the party committees which were meant to do most of this work. A Conservative accountant, whose diary for the years 1827-1834 is preserved in the NLS, found that canvassing New Town streets in 1832 was "a very uphill and laborious undertaking".[17] He was given no assistance and "finding therefore, that the business would occupy days in place of hours to do it well, I resolved to decline altogether".[18]

FOOTNOTES FOR APPENDIX II

1. Letter (8th June 1852) to Lord Melgund: NLS, Minto MS 135.2.

2. Edinburgh News, 8th November 1856. The Scotsman, however, in 1842 had attributed a candidate's election to the Town Council to "a very liberal distribution of the good things of this life, in a house which he opened for that purpose" (2nd November 1842). But these are the only newspaper references to treating for municipal elections in the entire period.

3. North Briton, 8th December 1866.

4. Ramsay's Journal, January 1835.

5. See, for example, Scotsman and Edinburgh Advertiser for January 1835. There was also this kind of criticism in 1832 and 1834.

6. There is a note to two tailors in a broadside collection in the Edinburgh Room of the EPL (18b YJN 1351(832)*) and one to an optician amongst a collection of newspaper cuttings in the NLS (7.31).

7. Edinburgh Miscellanea, Vol. IV, entry 193.

8. Campbell, Life, Vol. II, p.48.

9. Nicolson, Black, p. 82. This is corroborated in Cockburn, Jeffrey, Vol. I, p. 339.

10. Ramsay's Journal, 27th December 1834. Private subscriptions were to make up the money spent in excess of £1,500.

11. Scottish Press, 22nd February 1856.

12. Nicolson, Black, p. 103 and p. 162.

13. Appendix to Report from Select Committee on Election Expenses, Parliamentary Papers, 1834, Vol. IX, p. 166; Returns Relating to Election Expenses for Each of the Burghs of Scotland, Parliamentary Papers, 1854, Vol. LIX, pp. 3-5.

14. Returns from Sheriffs and Returning Officers of Expenses Incurred by Each Candidate at the General Election, Parliamentary Papers, 1866, Vol. LVI, pp. 20-21.

15. The size of the hustings crowd depended on time of day, the weather and the degree of excitement during a given election. Lord Ramsay's Journal includes striking impressions of what a Tory felt when facing a largely hostile hustings crowd: "at 11 we went into the Assembly rooms, and marched up, 900 to 1000 gentlemen, four deep with banners, to the hustings and with music ringing out most gallantly 'The Laird of Cockpen'. At 12 we went onto the hustings. A huge crowd was gathered before it, which roared, and yelled and cheered and hissed and hooted incessantly, swaying to and fro like the waves or like clouds of smoke, while the steam rose from the wet and sweaty multitude as from some gigantic potato boiler. . . . The crowd at first

15. (cont'd)

would not listen to a word; but gradually they became a little more quiet. It was a horrid sight to see so many faces all turned up towards you, with an expression of hatred and hostility and heaping execrations on your head. . . . I am sure I shall never forget the sight which presented itself when on the shew of hands for Mr. Abercromby being called for, everyone of them thrust both his hands into the air, with the fingers all separated and their original blackness pieballed by the constant wet which had poured on them for hours. The faces of many had the complexion and expression towards us of demons; and the hue of the hands was certainly calculated to preserve that impression which their faces had created" (12th January 1835).

16. Letter (28th August 1832): University College, Brougham MSS. The Tory Lord Ramsay, although a much younger man, found the ordeal in 1835, similarly exhausting: "it was truly a harrassing employment. Going thro' a county is nothing: for there you have some rest between each voter -- but to go as I did down one side of a street and up the other, stepping out of one door into the next, telling the same story, answering the same absurd objections, and (worst of all) making the same jokes is a tiresome business indeed" (Journal, 6th January 1835).

17. Lindsay Machersy, Diary, NLS MS 192, p. 122.

18. Ibid., p. 123. Machersy was not, in any case, an enthusiastic

18. (cont'd)

party worker. He did not like electioneering: "what a deal of heat and animosity, flattering of the rabble, misrepresentation, personality, and all uncharitableness introduced into a quiet community" (p. 123). If he was a typical Tory, his reluctance to engage in the rough-and-tumble of constituency battles may suggest why the Tory electoral efforts were not very aggressive.

APPENDIX III

An Occupational Analysis of Town Councillors

The following table shows the variety of occupations of Town Councillors serving in the Councils of 1833-1834, 1840-1841 and 1851-1852. I have chosen these Councils since they were all preceded by spirited elections and because they are at conveniently spaced intervals. The sources for the information are post office directories and newspapers, especially the Scotsman and Edinburgh Courant; there is no official list of Town Councillors in the Edinburgh city archives. I have been unable to identify the occupations of five of the Town Councillors elected in 1840 and three of those elected in 1851.

Occupation	1833-34	1840-41	1851-52
merchant	4	4	4
druggist	1		
baker	1	1	1
lawyer	6	7	6
sugar refiner	1		
bookseller/stationer	6	3	2
tailor	2	1	3
jeweller/watchmaker	1		1
architect	2		
civil engineer	1		2
doctor	3	2	1
wine/spirit merchant	2		1
hat maker	1		
shoe/boot maker	1		2
builder	2	1	1
engraver/printer		1	
furniture printer		1	
gentlemen		5	
perfumer		1	
flesher		1	1
quill dresser		1	
upholsterer			2
trunk maker			1
confectioner			1
professor			1

APPENDIX IV

An Occupational Analysis of the Edinburgh 'Radical Vote' of 1834

A printed edition of the electoral register of 1832 in the Edinburgh Public Library contains notes in the margins of each page of the votes of the electors in the 1832, 1834 and 1835 elections. I have based this survey on these notations and naturally the accuracy of my result is utterly dependent on the information of this unknown annotator. The electoral register of 1835 used for the analysis in Appendix I and used here as the basis for comparing the radical vote with the total electorate totals 7,748 electors. Aytoun received 480 votes, representing 6.2% of the total electorate. But as only 3,813 votes were cast in the election, Aytoun's 480 votes amounted to 12.5% of the votes actually cast. The first table is a summary of the information given in the five following tables.

Economic group	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun	% of voters for Aytoun within group	% of total Aytoun vote
Professions	2036	53	2.5	11.0
Retailers	2158	185	8.4	38.1
Whitecollar	414	14	3.5	3.0
Labourers	132	12	9.0	2.5
Craftsmen/ Manufacturers	2199	195	8.9	40.3
Miscellaneous	809	22	2.8	4.5

Part I: The Professions

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Teacher	135	7
Banking	66	2
Services	172	3
Clergymen, etc.	65	5
Artists	51	2
Law	1228	22
(including 4 advocates, 11 Writers to the Signet, 6 solicitors and 1 Law Court official)		
Medicine	327	12
(including 2 physicians, 7 surgeons, 2 M.D.s, and 1 optician)		

NOTE: Occupations with eight or more electors in 1835 and no votes for Aytoun in 1834 include architects (21 in 1835), students (8), and professors/lecturers (19).

Part II: Retailers

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Poulterers	4	1
Grocers	314	28
Victual dealers	76	16
Seedsmen	12	2
Publicans	60	4
Fruiterers	11	2
Stationers	52	1
Tobacconists	51	7
Oil merchants	3	1
Hairdressers	31	3
Confectioners	35	4
Pawnbrokers	12	3
Wood merchants	13	1
Brokers	46	6
China merchants	15	5
General merchants	393	19
Wine and spirit merchants	352	32
Bakers	207	23
Ironmongers	44	4
Meal dealers	14	3
Haberdashers	27	5
Booksellers	117	3
Flesher/butchers	136	5
Stoneware dealers	8	2
Coal merchants	29	1
Hotel/innkeepers	40	1
Salesmen	4	1

NOTE: Occupations with eight or more electors in 1835 and no votes for Aytoun in 1834 include fishmongers (8), music sellers (8), and horsehirers (11).

Part III: Whitecollar

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Accountants	128	5
House agents	6	2
Agents	72	4
Clerks	102	2
Civil Servants (including 1 policeman)	59	1

NOTE: Occupations with eight or more electors in 1835 and no votes for Aytoun in 1834 include auctioneers (13) and surveyors (22).

Part IV: Labourers

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Canalmen	2	1
Cowfeeders	56	7
Carriers	6	1
Chimney sweeps	3	1
Warehousemen	8	1
Gardeners	53	1

NOTE: Occupations with eight or more electors in 1835 and no votes for Aytoun in 1834 include servants (25) and messengers (14).

Part V: Craftsmen and Manufacturers

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Slaters	21	1
Stablers	19	1
Bootmakers	205	32
Printers/publishers	105	7
Painters	87	7
Brushmakers	14	4
Cabinetmakers	110	12
Toymakers	6	1
Shawl manufacturers	14	2
Engravers	44	3
Wigmakers	2	1
Marble cutters	7	1
Bookbinders	20	2
Glass cutters	12	2
Upholsterers	42	3
Leather manufacturers	45	5
Venetian blind manu.	5	1
Silk mercers	40	1
Coachmakers	57	1
Coopers	6	1
Metalworkers (including 1 wireworker, 2 tinsmiths, 7 blacksmiths, and 4 brassfounders)	107	14
Ropemakers	6	2
Tailor/clothiers	243	20
Hosier/glovers	38	5
Wrights	78	7
Builders	155	8
Hatters	40	4
Clockmakers	33	8
Bell hangers	6	1
Furniture makers	9	2
Jewellers	85	7
Drapers	67	10
Saddlers	31	1
Masons	28	3
Umbrella makers	6	2
Cork cutters	8	1
Lint manufacturers	4	2
Carpet makers	3	1
Manufacturers	27	4
Combmakers	7	1

Part V: Craftsmen and Manufacturers (continued)

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Candlemakers	14	1
Gunmakers	9	1
Implement/tool makers (including 1 toolmaker and 1 cutler)	28	2

NOTE: Occupations with eight or more electors in 1835 and no votes for Aytoun in 1834 include plasterers (14), plumbers (25), engineers (30), brewers (67), skinners (10), carver/gilders (22), perfumers (15), musical instrument makers (14), lacemakers (8), and dyers (13)

Part VI: Miscellaneous

Occupation	number of voters in 1835	number of voters for Aytoun
Residenters	562	19
Gentlemen	207	3

NOTE: Occupations which gave no votes to Aytoun in 1834 but which had more than eight electors in 1835 include farmers/foresters (23)

A glance at the summary table will immediately show that the 'radical vote' was not confined to any one particular economic group of citizens in 1834; nor, could any of the economic groups be considered a radical political force insofar as they expressed themselves through the suffrage. The main conclusion of this analysis is that it shows that no one occupation or economic group was substantially more or less radical than any other. Aytoun had a very few supporters in almost all the large occupations, but in none of these occupations did he have anything like complete or even majority support. The relatively higher proportional vote Aytoun received in some small occupations (e.g. lint manufacturers, two out of four, or ropemakers, two out of six) may have resulted from quirks of chance; or they may have been tips of radical icebergs, indicating that among the unenfranchised members of some occupations he could have claimed majority support. But clearly, among the voting members of all the occupations there was no such unanimity.

The professions were very unreceptive to Aytoun's radicalism and gave him only 11% of his total vote; a mere 2.5% of the professional group supported him at the polls. Although the retailers accounted for 38.1% of Aytoun's support, only 8.4% of these electors voted for him. His support was exceedingly diverse, proceeding from all kinds of occupations. The pattern was exactly

the same with the craftsmen/manufacturing group: 40.3% of the total vote, yet only 8.9% support within the group, and the same extremely small support from a variety of occupations. The labourer group gave Aytoun only 2.5% of his total vote -- a miserable 9% of the group vote, far less than what one might have expected. It should be kept in mind, however, that those very few labourers who were eligible to vote in 1834 probably did not share many opinions with their unenfranchised, poorer labouring brethren; they were also subject to intimidation which was prevalent in this election (see Appendix II). The white collar group was almost as un-radical as the professions, and residenters and gentlemen brought up the conservative rear with a paltry 2.8% group vote.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliographical Essay

The major source for this thesis has been Edinburgh newspapers. There are no large private sources that I have been able to discover and often official records are not nearly as informative as newspapers. For example, for knowledge of Town Council affairs the historian is dependent almost entirely on newspaper reports. Town Council minutes throughout the period are the briefest official records; no speeches were recorded and only rarely were votes noted member by member. Letterbooks too dealt only with official business of the most uninformative kind. Conversely, the newspapers often gave quite full coverage to important speeches (including interruptions), indicated the voting of individual members, and discussed in leaders the mood and implications of Town Council meetings which were completely ignored in the official Town Council minutes. The accuracy of newspaper reporting seems to have been high for Town Council affairs, and I have noted practically no discrepancies between reports in different newspapers of Council meetings.

In general, the usefulness of most 19th century official minutes, whether ecclesiastical or professional, is severely limited. The presbytery records and the minutes of the legal and merchant societies can confirm what the newspapers suggest or state, but on their own they contain very little political information indeed. For my

purposes they are most valuable in showing how some political groups used or participated in bodies like the Chamber of Commerce to publicize their point of view. But the most striking feature of all these records is in fact their non-partizan quality. It appears to have been a universal trait of 19th century minute-takers to delete from their notes as much controversial matter as possible, picking away all the flesh of politics and personalities, leaving a cold bare skeleton -- slim pickings indeed for the historian. There is a lifeless quality about all the minutes I have read which was probably a product of the common desire to keep divisions as innocent-looking as possible and to give the impression of unity. Whatever may explain the neutrality of 19th century minutes, it is clear that their use for the political historian is very limited; they contain very little information which cannot be found elsewhere, in a much more assimilable form.

The lack of party records for the period before 1868 is a sad one as is the lack of records for the interest groups such as the various anti-annuity tax associations and the Edinburgh Anti-Corn Law Association. Manuscript collections of individuals connected with such interest groups would be of great use but are not available. The only extensive correspondence collections which have been preserved are those of the Whigs, and while very useful in many cases they do have some major short-comings. Chief among these are their patchiness, particularly for the Whigs who spent much time in London (all the Lord Advocates, M.P.S, etc.). When

in London their correspondence tended to be very much concerned with Parliament and national issues and activities; and when elections drew their thoughts back to Edinburgh, they usually came home to Edinburgh at which time their correspondence abruptly ceased, just when it is, from my point of view, getting interesting. The main collections I have consulted (the Riccarton and Dalhousie MSS in the SRO and the Rutherfurd and Ellice MSS in the NLS) are useful primarily for the 1830s and 1840s; the 1850s and 1860s are very poorly documented by any collection. Two official collections of papers, the Lord Advocates' in the Scottish Record Office and the Home Office MSS in the Public Record Office in London, are disappointing. The former is a miscellaneous assortment of legislative drafts and copy letterbooks containing the most prosaic letters (mostly requests for and acknowledgements of receipt of official returns and reports). It is clear that all letters remotely political in nature were disposed of by the Lord Advocate and not allowed to gather among his official papers. Home Office papers in London and the out-letterbooks are just as uninformative in the same way. Pamphlets are only a little more useful. Almost all pamphlets after 1832 were concerned with religious matters. In the 1830s the voluntary controversy spawned a multitude of pro and con pamphlets, a few of which stray beyond the scriptural arguments to cast oblique light upon political matters. During the mid-1840s a sabbatarian pamphlet literature blossomed just as the no-Popery pamphlets emerged in the late 1840s; both kinds of pamphlets

continued to appear throughout the 1850s and indeed continue to appear today. I have found few sabbatarian or anti-Popery pamphlets with direct bearings upon elections, but of course they do form part of the background to the religious parties of the period and are duly noted in the relevant chapters above. But in the role which pamphlets might once have played in politics they were by the 1830s, almost completely superseded by the newspapers.

At the foundation of the Edinburgh Voluntary Church Association in 1832 a motion was passed which recommended that in order to propagate the voluntary principle, "the chief instrument which it is proposed to employ is the public Press -- a fair and honourable weapon, of which the use is equally open to all, and by which we can make an impression only upon the reason and conscience of our countrymen".[1] Although the pamphlet played a role in the voluntary controversy, it was increasingly the newspaper which was seen and used as the most effective weapon in spreading the truth and unifying the voluntary group.[2] McLaren almost always made sure of the support of at least one newspaper -- the Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle in the 1840s, the Scottish Press in the late 1840s and 1850s and the Caledonian Mercury in the early 1860s. The Whigs had had the Scotsman since 1817 and after 1832 the Caledonian Mercury, and that may explain why I have found not one political pamphlet from the Whig point of view between 1832 and about 1867 when some pamphlets on Parliamentary reform were produced. The importance to an ambitious minority group

of having a journalistic voice was demonstrated by the care taken by the Non-Intrusionists to establish the Witness. And after the disruption the liberal Free Churchmen swiftly found a journalistic counterblast to the conservative Witness in the Edinburgh News. Even the Chartists managed to support several Scottish newspapers. In all these newspapers not only were the particular desires of an interest group expressed, but also the political events of the day were reviewed from the standpoint of that group's interests. Thus by comparing several accounts of a given election from different newspapers with varying principles, one begins to gain a composite outlook and is able to attain a degree of objectivity which would never be possible from reading just one newspaper. With newspapers' lowering prices and increasing circulation after the reduction of the stamp tax in 1836 from 4d. to 1d.,[3] the newspaper became the most effective publicity vehicle for interest groups and replaced the pamphlet as a political weapon. The pamphlet remained the weapon of certain church interest groups, especially the sabbatarians and no-Popery zealots, in much the same way as such pamphlets remain today the standard fare in church porches all over the country.

Newspapers are obviously not the ideal source for political history, but particularly for 19th century urban political history there appear to be few alternative sources. In the absence of any private information concerning so many of the local politicians and parties and interest groups, the newspaper is the best source

of public information. And even granted the public nature of the newspapers they are a surprisingly valuable source when used comparatively. As an urban historian, Dr. R. Newton, has pointed out in his study of Victorian Exeter:

> much use has been made of the contemporary newpapers to establish the framework, what happened and when. Newspapers do not necessarily give a true explanation of events, but they reported what was done and said with a fullness derived from the principle that knowledge was necessary for the exercise of active and vigilant citizenship. 4

And Henry Pelling has written that "the most important source for the actual conduct of the elections, the behaviour of the candidates and the reasons for their success or failure is the national and local Press".[5] Newton and Pelling are just two of the many historians who have had to rely primarily on newspapers for the investigation of 19th century political history.[6] If such history is to be written at all, historians must recognize the value, both relative and absolute, of newspapers and accept the regrettable but inevitable shortcomings which the lack of alternative sources causes.

FOOTNOTES FOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

1. Dick, Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Evangelical Dissenters, p. 3.

2. See Scotus, An Exposure of the Sentiments and Projects of the Voluntary Church Associations (Edinburgh, 1833), p. 13 ff., for recognition of the use which voluntaries had made of the newspaper.

3. Cowan, Newspaper in Scotland, pp. 133-135.

4. Newton, Victorian Exeter, p. xx.

5. H. Pelling, Social Geography of British Elections, 1885-1910 (London, 1967), p. 25.

6. Among other historians who have made extensive use of the local press are M. Thomis in Old Nottingham (Newton Abbot, 1968), R. Church in Victorian Nottingham, A.T. Patterson in Radical Leicester, S. Pollard in A History of Labour in Sheffield (Liverpool, 1959), B.D. White in A History of the Corporation of Liverpool (Liverpool, 1951) and C. Gill in Vol. I of History of Birmingham.

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Note: All the works included have been consulted but not necessarily cited in the text. Anonymous works are listed by title.

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A. Manuscripts

1. Collections of Correspondence
2. Diaries
3. Institutional Minutes
   - a) Church Presbytery Minutes
   - b) Minutes of Secular Organisations
     - (i) Minutes In Public Collections
     - (ii) Privately Held Minutes
4. Public Records

B. Parliamentary Papers

C. Contemporary Periodicals

1. Newspapers
2. Other Periodicals

D. Pamphlets

E. Contemporary Printed Autobiographies, Memoirs, etc.

F. Scrapbooks in Edinburgh Public Library

II. Secondary Sources

A. Books

1. Reference Works
2. Biographical Works
3. Historical Works

B. Articles

C. Dissertations

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Note: Those MSS marked * were uncatalogued at time of presentation of thesis. Their reference designations are, therefore, temporary.

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KEY

Parliamentary Boundary

Town Council District Boundaries

Boundary as defined by the Reform Bill 1832

MAP
of the
COUNTY of MID-LOTHIAN
Ten Miles round
EDINBURGH,
And
LEITH.

PLAN
of
EDINBURGH
AND LEITH,
ENGRAVED EXPRESSLY FOR
THE POST OFFICE,
DIRECTORY,